

hello and welcome to episode 51 of
question and answer I am your host panio
Basa

and because I went two weeks without
doing one of these we've got lots of
questions in fact we've got so many
questions that this may be divided up
into two parts

um also in future I may have to uh
instill some discipline

exercise some discipline

and maybe limit the number of questions
down to like five for each person so
each person can ask a maximum of five or
if they ask more than five I will
reserve the right to choose the most

juicy and succulent questions to answer

um

otherwise I'm not sure how we're going

to manage this I mean once once a week I

guess is doable

but um we'll just we'll just have to see

how it got

because there are some people that I

mean they asked lots of questions and

that's good I mean it's good to be

curious

you know but um

I'm going to have a drink of my beverage

now

also you may have noticed that I'm not

wearing my new Fez

but I do have it on display back there

so that those of you who are really into
The Fez can look over my shoulder and
gaze upon it in awe and wonder

so without any further Ado because we do
have lots of questions here well I guess
this is further Ado I mean

yeah this is a do this is more a do I'm
sorry but um

oh now I forgot what I was gonna say
that is so weird so okay without any
further Ado uh I'll start answering
questions and the first one is from
Francois known to some perhaps as
Francois

and Francois says the materialistic
worldview of Western Buddhism is

problematic indeed since according to my understanding of Buddhism it is morality or Karma that shapes the universe the Buddhists cosmogeny is a hierarchy of beings and planes of existence based on Karma where the only way out is to do just enough Good Karma to gain ultimate wisdom and eventually transcend all karmas together but still the conditions of existence of all beings is a result of their karma so morality is the only framework that actually matters is that a right interpretation

well I might put it in slightly different words but um yeah that's that's I would be mostly incorrect In in like agreement with that with with a few

qualifiers I mean you can say

um I mean like Orthodox terravada puts

more emphasis

on ignorance as like the the

foundational principle of worldly

existence

so but it's ignorance that causes Karma

because if you don't have any ignorance

you don't have any Karma

like an aura hunt who is who has

completely eradicated delusion at least

spiritual delusion uh he's not making

Karma anymore

um there's this one part here the only

way out is to do just enough Good Karma

to gain ultimate wisdom and eventually

transcend all karmas all together

that um I don't know I have to think

about that I guess but um I mean you get

good karma to put yourself in a position

where you can practice more effectively

but

um yeah it isn't the Good Karma that

gets you in line that's that in a way

that sort of like Sila Bata paramasa

where somebody thinks that morality is

going to to liberate them but um yeah in

in general I would agree with this

that uh you know it's ignorance that

causes Karma which is what is

essentially generating this universe

and uh

I mean the only way out is I mean yeah

it helps to do good karma definitely

and uh but eventually

um

you're you're it's like you're trying to

uh long before you gain ultimate wisdom

you're trying to like sublimate Karma

make it more subtle make just because

the karma whether it's good karma or Bad

Karma you know the good karma is like

the up and the Bad Karma is the down of

the roller coaster ride

so I mean there's a kind of

transcendental Good Karma which is sort

of neutral Karma or just subtle Karma

that

you know it is more conducive to wisdom

just because it produces more you know
peace and Clarity of mind so yeah you
know in a way I would agree with this I
mean mostly I would agree with this I
might use a slightly different language
but yeah it's it's mostly in my opinion
you know it's pretty much a right
interpretation

so I'll just move on to the next
question this is from crazy librarian
and crazy Librarians says what happens
if a monk's parents or family member got
sick and have no one to care for them do
monks get help
to care for their parents or family
um some monks do take care of their
parents I mean it often results in among

disrobing you know like

um there were a few monks in Asia that I
knew who went back to America because
like for example one of them his mother
had dementia and he wanted to take care
of his mother and then eventually he
just drops out because it's hard for a
monk to be a caretaker for somebody when
he can't drive he can't handle money you
know he's not supposed to feed himself
all this kind of stuff so it almost
necessitates breaking rules in the west
especially

um

I mean if a monk in Asia

um

yeah I mean he could if he's if he's
like a Seattle you know like in in Burma
you know he's sort of like a famous monk
he could get somebody to take care of
them easily but uh
yeah it can be problematic and if
there's nobody else to take care of the
Aging parents the monk may have to
choose between you know his duty as a
son or you know his duty to practice
dhamma as intensively as he can
because sometimes it just doesn't work
out you can't be living alone in a cave
taking care of an aging parent or some
like an invalid or you know like a
special needs child or something yeah
you're gonna have to make the choice in

a situation like that I think
so let's see crazy librarian's next
question has Buddhism ever talked about
identical twins what is the karma
between two people born as identical
twins that's an interesting question I
I'm not I don't remember ever seeing any
mention of identical twins in like
theravada Buddhist literature
um

presumably I think I've read elsewhere
that identical twins have like a strong
like karmic connection with each other
you know they've been very close over
multiple lives which has caused that
although

um

I'm not sure I mean this would be heresy from the terrible point of view but I mean it's theoretically possible you know at least it could be imagined that this could happen and that you've got a karmic stream that just splits into sort of like the like the egg that is the progenitor of two identical twins splits into and then produces you know it just becomes like two zygotes and then turns into two people uh something similar I suppose could theoretically at least happen with with Karma where it just kind of splits and then you got two with very similar Karma that wind up being born you know like genetically

identical

although as I say that probably would be heresy in terrible Buddhism probably the correct the correct answer according to terrible Buddhism the Orthodox answer would just be that you've got these two karmic streams or beings beings who have been strongly bonded you know they got the strong karmic connection you know they've been father and son or mother and daughter or married or you know you know they've just been you know having life many lifetimes where they have had this close Association and maybe they're just really you know they have like this affinity

where they just become so attuned to each other and so close to each other that they just get born you know from the same womb at the same time almost you know genetically identical although they do have different Karma because identical twins as a general rule they uh you know they don't have exactly the same personality for example they don't do exactly the same things and I was recently working in a sheet metal shop with identical twins there and um I've noticed that uh it's usually if you have like a more like a more Alpha of the two he tends to be the one that was born first or she you know it might just be 10 minutes apart but still you know they

get named first you know or like when
you're mentioning both of them you know
the the older one in the family at least
usually is first on the on the list
or whatever

um

so they're not exactly the same

but um

I'll just move on to the next question

and this is from CEO vacch and sipad

zidana

and seal of action says

I found this strange suta from the

samyutanikaya 41.6

called the dutia kamabuta suta it is a

discussion between shita the householder

and a monk where he is asking him questions and he asks but sir when a mannequin has emerged from the attainment of the cessation of perception and feeling how many kinds of contact do they experience and the monk replies they experience three kinds of contact emptiness signlessness and undirected contacts

based on my understanding this means they make contact with the nibana element as soon as Consciousness is booted up again the explanation I've heard is that nibana existed during the cessation as well but we only experienced neighbor when Consciousness arises again but how can they possibly

know if this is a more traditional
interpretation then what's the point of
cessation if there's no consciousness
experiencing nibana according to
Orthodox tradition the traditional view
just seems like annihilationism to me
but I don't know

well this is all talking about
um

I have another drink just a second
this is all talking about a phenomenon
called niroda samapati or the attainment
of cessation and the cessation is of
perception and feeling
and it's only attainable by very
Advanced Saints and it's like kind of

above fourth genome

and really it's just in a way just a

kind of suspended animation

and

um I am kind of skeptical as to how far

back this idea of neroda samapidi goes

this uh suta that he's mentioning is

kind of a case in point as it's a little

bit questionable because it's not even

attributed to the Buddha himself and

usually sutas that are not attributed to

the Buddha himself but to some other

monk or none tend to be later

there you know they have more uh

like characteristics of of later stuff

and not earlier stuff

and so

he says how many contacts do they
experience after they've emerged from
the attainment of cessation of
perception and feeling and the monk
replies they experience three kinds of
contact emptiness signlessness and
undirected contacts and I think usually
instead of undirected it's like
choiceless

you know it's and and they're all more
or less synonyms like signlessness means
you know there's no perceptual object
there that

um

yeah

yeah it's uh it's kind of hard to

discuss it but yeah I think I mean these
emptiness signlessness and undirected
contacts

um in a way they're all describing the
same state I mean

um you know it's sort of like the state
of this cessation itself

uh and really as I've discussed a number
of times before Orthodox theravada
really cannot describe nibana they
cannot describe the state of

Enlightenment very well because they
just in a way the scholars who came up
with like abhi dhamma in the
commentarial tradition especially
they're just trying to fit in the nibana
into the whole scheme of samsara you

know it's like

um in Abu dhama there are four main

ultimate realities you got mind matter

mental states and nibbana so that nibana

is just on this list of other like

phenomena so they're trying to fit it

into this system

and it doesn't really work that way and

they can't really describe what nibana

is they got rid of the whole idea of

formless infinite Consciousness which

was there in older texts but

um as Orthodoxy developed they they

moved away from that and you if you ask

like an orthodox monk like a like some

Burmese scholar Seattle they'll say it

is the principle of cessation is nibana
but I mean cessation lasts one moment if
it lasts even that long I mean
something's there and then it stops
being there I mean how's that going to
be

like unconditioned

so they really I mean

they didn't have like The Logical

sophistication of like later Mahayana

philosophy and

they're attempting to describe nibana in

essentially a samsaric way or at least

relying entirely on samsaric Concepts

and so forth and it just doesn't work

very well

um

see so what's the question here

let's see but how can they possibly know

if they experience Nirvana yeah this is

another this is another thing a bad

logic like

um I had a discussion with a really

Orthodox pop monk once

and it's like you know if you're in a

state of cessation for example how are

you going to know that you are in a

student's decision or even how can this

was the question I think that I asked

him it's like according to abhidham

everything's blinking off and on at like

a trillion times a second or 10 trillion

times a second but it's it's flashing

off and on everything including your own
mind your own mind is flashing off and
on like 17 times faster than matter mind
is faster than matter but

I mean if your own Consciousness is
ceasing to exist you wouldn't be aware
of that

you know it's like you it's all the the
non-existent parts would just cancel out
you wouldn't be aware of them because
your Consciousness wouldn't be operating
in this very Orthodox monk said well you
just review that but I mean you can't
review what you never experience you
can't review what you never viewed to
begin with and so there's all these kind
of bugs in the system that maybe in

ancient times they just did not have the sophisticated logic even to catch it or they come up with some stop Gap kind of Jerry rig kind of explanation for it that really it satisfies those that are you know very eager to be satisfied because they've got like a vested interest in theravada for example but skeptical people from outside the system or even skeptical weird westerners inside the system they're just not satisfied by these answers and um yeah like cessation I mean in a way um if it's cessation of perception and feeling there could still be Consciousness but then again Orthodox

terravada says no there can't be

Consciousness because you can't have

Consciousness without the perception and
feeling

I want end volition too

so

yeah it's uh in a way it is very similar
to annihilationism

they've got nibana as this Ultimate

Reality that is unconditioned and so
forth

but they can't really explain it in any
way other than cessation

which is pretty much annihilationism I

mean if something ceases or it is

annihilated it's pretty much the same

non-existence afterwards

so I can understand

um confusion with regard to this kind of stuff because it is confusing it's just the confusion is essentially built into the system

so I'll just move on to his next question

I know you have said States above four

John us probably were added later but

I've had interesting experiences with

anesthesia it's like you blink but

instead of a second passing by two hours

have passed and there was nothing in

between those two moments medical nerota

how would you explain this from a

non-materialistic perspective it's hard

to believe nibana can really be
uncreated and undecaying based on this
experience as well

um this I mean I pretty much understand
what you said at first but this last
part when he actually gets to the
question mark the question part

um

especially the second one no wait no
there's only one question mark

uh yeah it's a little hard to answer so

let's see how would you explain this

from a non-materialist perspective it

would be like if your Consciousness

you've got Consciousness there but it is

devoid of content

then I mean

I mean essentially a coma or suspended animation it'd be like the nerota samopody that we were just discussing I mean probably in euroda samopathy also you would not be aware of the passage of time that's that's what you would that's what I would expect you know you go into neurotosomopathy you're not even aware of having gone into it I mean how would you be aware unless there's still some kind of

um still some kind of mentality going on because if all mentality ceases then the passage of time ceases because the passage of time is itself a mental phenomenon

I mean time in in reality even according
to like like

Einstein physics it's the it's the
fourth dimension it's it's not changing
it's just our mental system you know
maybe the crudeness of our mentality
causes us to experience this fourth
dimension in like a linear sequence but
it's not necessarily how it exists in
reality

so it's hard to believe Nirvana can
really be uncreated and undecaying based
on this experience as well well I mean
nibana just transcends the whole system
you know it's just off the scale
and trying to understand it
intellectually is not going to work it's

just not going to work but I do believe
that there is an Ultimate Reality
underlying all this
symbolic stuff that we're experiencing
these mental projections
you know there is an underlying reality
underlying the world as well and
representation
and it's just I'd be inclined to go
along with a more or less Upon A shotic
and archaic Buddhist idea that is just
infinite formless Consciousness
containing within it everything every
possibility
so in a way it's everything and nothing
which is uh no it's it's hard to explain

so I'll just move on to CEO of action's
next question

I have read that psychopaths are born
with brain wiring that basically makes
them see other people the same as
objects and they lack a theory of mind
which makes you see other people as
sentient beings like ourselves if this
is the case then a psychopath could have
similar mental States while killing and
torturing people as a child has while
playing with Legos how does karma affect
them if they mentally might not have had
ill will or even negative mental States
when committing all these atrocities
other than fear of getting caught well I
mean I have read I read one book about

Psychopaths a study of the Criminal Mind
and not all people are born Psychopaths
I mean some people are just like abused
or neglected as children and that turns
them into sociopaths somehow you know
it's like they start acting out as a way
of getting attention because otherwise
they just get ignored by their parents
and children need a lot of attention
those of you who have had small children
know that children
thrive on it I mean they need attention
and Mary Baker Eddy has this idea that
very small children if they don't get
enough attention they can die because
they don't have the mentality to keep

their own existence going Mary Baker
every being an idealist who did not
believe in material matter so that you
have to have these Minds kind of keeping
this new weak small being in existence
until it's old enough or mature enough
to keep itself alive
but uh I've I've wandered away here
um my answer to this would be that a
sociopath or a psychopath as as CEO of
action Cod Z do not calls them
um I assume he means essentially a
sociopath someone who has no conscience
someone who has no compassion and some
of them enjoy like enjoy killing
prostitutes or whatever it is that
they're doing they enjoy hurting others

so it's not like necessarily a child
playing with Legos it's not like the
same mentality but the thing is
in my opinion my interpretation is that
a sociopath is cut off from the deeper
levels of consciousness they still have
a subconscious mind they still got the
deeper stuff going on including Karma
but it's like they're dissociated from
it they don't have any conscious
connection with that or even a
semi-conscious connection you know
they're they're cut off from the deeper
layers of their mind more than the
average person
and nevertheless those deeper layers are

still there so probably at a
subconscious level they do have
um like human empathy or maybe not
compassion so much but I mean they cut
they know what they're doing
and they're making they're doing it
anyway they're making the Bad Karma
anyway because

I mean just because you're dissociated
from the lower levels of your
Consciousness or you might say the
higher levels of your Consciousness
um that doesn't mean that they aren't
still there and they aren't still
operating and making Karma
so that would be my answer to that one
someone just move on to see of actions

next question you have said hydrogen atoms might be conscious how can it be these more primitive forms of Consciousness come together and form a functioning Consciousness that doesn't identify with any of the individual atoms but creates a completely new kind of consciousness

like those of the senses that manifest together

as a human being but at the same time most of our body is doing things that we have no conscious awareness of besides besides despite being made up of these same conscious atoms so why aren't we conscious of these as well even if it

even if it this what's happening in
reality I can eat I can't even imagine
how chemical reactions between the atoms
can make the Consciousness continue
together like this in this sense even
the general materialist epiphenomenal
explanation explanation has no real
answer and becomes an unsolvable hard
problem instead

so

let's see so the actual question mark is
about halfway up here it's the same but
at the same time most of our body is
doing things that we have no conscious
awareness of besides being despite
being made up of the same conscious
atoms so why aren't we conscious of

these as well well I mean

a human body is essentially a colony of
protozoans you know each one of our
cells is like this unicellular organism
the cell is like the unit of of
multi-cellular life just the unit of
life in general which is one reason why
viruses aren't considered to be fully
Alive because they don't have a cell
structure

um

so yeah it's it's going I guess the
easiest way to answer this would be
going with the the analogy of a computer
that the computer
it isn't creating electricity but it's

organizing it it's complexifying and
organizing it and utilizing it and the
electricity itself is supposedly just
individual electrons flowing through
wires or circuits or whatever and how do
how do these individual electrons turn
into all the complex stuff that
computers do

so

uh in a way it's just like a at a higher
dimension of complexity you got this
higher dimension of of activity going on
that we can't really understand I've
thought about this just in terms of like
a civilization might actually have a
higher Consciousness in a sense than the
individual person does and we're not

aware of that either any more than like
a skin cell or even a brain cell is
aware of all the complexity of our of
our behavior and our thoughts and so
forth

so it's just

I mean there are philosophers that
specialize in this you know how
individual letters come together into
meaningful sentences and entire stories
and so forth how individual atoms come
together to form

um what is what does it mean it's like
Synergy where the whole is greater than
the sum of its parts

so this would be a synergistic thing and

you may have to find an expert on Synergy to explain how our individual cells can create a functioning human has feelings and thoughts and hopes and dreams and so forth or how these electrochemical reactions in the brain can can do likewise or how the electrons flowing through the circuits in a computer can do something kind of similar

um it's it's a case of synergy I suppose and just you've got they're forming into a greater dimensional

hole that just has so much more complexity to it that it forms its own kind of

of um

essence

I didn't know how to put it it's Synergy

so we'll just move on to the next

question which is a sub question of the

the previous one also how does this

connect to the idea of nibbana is

nibbana like the most fundamental form

of matter like that of the quantum wave

function or strings in string theory

even with this it's not clear how this

would turn into the sensory forms of

Consciousness

um I would say that nibbana wouldn't be

the quantum wave function or strings and

string theory so much as it would be

like just like the quantum field which
contains zero energy and infinite energy
simultaneously

that it's just like the the basic
substratum from which everything else
arises

and that's it's also heresy I'm sure

like I was saying earlier taravada

really doesn't describe nibana that way

but they can't really describe nibana

very well at all as some kind of reality

new nibana

is described in the text

like in the sutta is more as just sort of

an ethical thing it's just the getting

free of samsara

and you know just freeing yourself of

defilements and greed hate and delusion
and so forth and duka
and didn't delusion but as a kind of
metaphysical state that is infinite that
is unconditioned it you know it's it's
Eternal Timeless they're they're really
not good at explaining that and that's
kind of understandable considering that
you can't really explain what's
completely off the scale of samsara
because explanations are by their very
nature necessarily samsaric
so we'll just move on to see of action C
part Z in this next question
people with multiple personalities claim
it's as if different people exist in

their mind and different people take over as the main character and control the body at different times do you think this is a result of multiple karmic streams ending up in the same body sometimes people can develop MPD multiple personality disorder due to trauma so can this lead to one karmic stream splitting into two or more well I knew a person that to some degree had multiple personalities I mean they weren't like extremely different it was sort of a subtle case of it and I think just about anybody is going to have multiple personalities depending on the circumstances you know you're alone with your your significant other

you're going to have a different kind of personality usually in most people then you then you're gonna have when you're at work or when you're standing in line at the grocery store or whatever

so I mean sometimes you can be in a weird silly mood and sometimes you're serious or like another good case is some people

they're they're have a certain personality that may be very restrained and then they get drunk and just turn into a monster

you know they just become completely uninhibited just anything goes you know they're getting in fights and all this

stuff

which they wouldn't do if they were

sober

so I think that just about everybody has

like different compartments or just sort

of different modes that they shift back

and forth into which uh in a way are

sort of like branches of the karmic

stream that are still connected

and I think that a person with multiple

personalities would just be a more

extreme example of that so much so that

they're kind of the different strands

are dissociated from each other

but in a sense

a person who's throwing a raging

conniption is pretty much dissociated at

that time from the calmer elements of
his own personality
so I wouldn't say that multiple
personalities is necessarily except in
maybe some really rare extreme cases a
case of more than one being
inhabiting the same body except maybe in
cases of like possession
and Buddhism does acknowledge the
existence of of possession so it could
be that although I'm pretty sure that
multiple personality disorder is
considered to be a kind of neurotic
hysteria maybe Neurosis is is obsolete
now but it's a kind of Hysteria which is
below the level of psychosis

you know it's it's not like you're
really crazy except unless like maybe
you're really Advanced like extreme
cases like that old movie Sybil based on
a book

starring Sally Field I think it was I
mean that's a pretty extreme case and
yeah it's it's possible but getting into
extreme cases like that I mean I'm no
expert on them I don't have any personal
experience with cases like that

so I'll just stick with what I've
already said and move on to the next
question

did you ever become fluent in Burmese
how well did you end up in your
conversational skills in the language

and how long did it take I became about
as fluent in Burmese as like a
seven-year-old kid you know I could
speak Burmese about as well as maybe a
six or seven year old Burmese kid
um with regard to basic stuff you know I
had it pretty much down but with regard
to unusual stuff that I didn't talk
about generally like fixing cars or
politics or something you know there's
this jargon that I just never learned
and I never really picked up much on
just the slang like the idiom kind of
stuff every once in a while I'd be
accused of talking like a dictionary or
a book because I just try to you know

say literally what I meant and just completely be oblivious to these common idioms that everybody uses except me

um how well did you end up yeah okay and how long did it take

um it took maybe a couple years in my case but I've never been very good at foreign languages I met a few people there was this one European nun who was pretty much fluent within just a matter of a few months

some women especially I think women are better at learning foreign languages than men are in General on average and so someone who really has a knack for picking up foreign languages Burmese really is not a very difficult language

except for the pronunciation like the
vocabulary is not all that big it
doesn't have like weird verb forms and
just things like you know like is was
were

you know that kind of thing they don't
have or like good better best you know
in in Burmese it would be good more good
most good which is you know makes
perfect sense

so really the only really difficult
thing about learning Burmese you know
it's a relatively simple language but
the difficult thing is the pronunciation
because Burmese has sounds that are not
differentiated in English

means it's very rainy mokone with like a
harder K means it's a drought so you can
have almost exactly the same sentence
with just one little difference and it's
the exact opposite in meaning and if you
say the wrong thing it's uh people look
at you like you're speaking Greek I knew
this one Australian monk who because the
word for need low no no no
is is almost exactly pronounced the same
as the worst cuss word in the in the
Burmese language
that uh he just would never say the word
need he was afraid of accidentally just
cussing and causing some young woman to
start crying or something
so

it's it's pretty easy to learn if you're
good at foreign languages so I'll just
move on to the next question here

from covax ncpad zidana

also how has Burmese culture changed you
as a person after living among them all
those years

um yeah that's it's kind of a subtle
thing but it's a good question how has
how it had living in Burma for more than
20 years you know more than a third of
my life

how's that affected me I think one of
the main reasons one of the main ways
that it affected me is that when you're
living in a very different culture from

the one you were born and raised in
then it's it's uh you know it's almost
like taking psychedelic drugs for the
first time where you're seeing that
there's other ways of looking at reality
because some I mean we're all human so
we're more similar than different
you know Al Burmese villager is you know
more similar than different to some
American urbanite
but still there's just basic assumptions
there's the whole
um like metaphysic of existence
um you know they're they're in a way to
some degree like pre-scientific they
still have kind of a medieval attitude
so that in some ways they come closer to

like a medieval European you know like
from the 14th or 15th century than they
would you know a modern or post-modern
european

especially you get out into the remote
Village areas maybe in the cities you
know there's there's definitely some
difference but

um so that's that's one thing it's just
you're exposed to a very different way
of going about life and a very different
way of looking at life and so it gives
you a certain amount of perspective you
know you realize that that Western
Scientific materialism or scientific
realism isn't the only possible way of

looking at reality

and most western Buddhists

you know they still just assume that

like Western objectivity

is just a given that's just how you look

at life and it's not necessarily so and

another way that

um living in Burma has affected me is

Burmese villagers especially the last

um or the The Village The Villages I

live near the longest which was Lemie

Village and one bow Village the people

there are just abnormally moral and

virtuous and modest people

so much though that a western might be

skeptical that such people could exist

but

um you see how just Simplicity of Life
plus just accepting Buddha Dharma just
without question it causes not
necessarily Utopia but still it's
um it's a better way of living than the
messed up way that most westerners live
their lives so there's that too I've
I've come to appreciate that and I have
a lot of respect for the Burmese I mean
I can criticize certain things about
them but at the same time I have to
acknowledge as a general rule they're
better people than we are just because
they're not so distracted by all this
artificial crap going on and also they
just accept

Dharma without question

they just know that it's true

and there are probably other things too

but I got more questions to answer here

so I'll just move on to the next

question

how do you square the idea of liminality

and the law of dependent origination

based on my little understanding it

seems like dependent origination would

exclude the possibility of liminality

and psychic powers and the Paranormal

would still work based on causes and

conditions but I don't know

uh yeah that is a good point I mean

dependent origination would still exist

because anything that exists is

dependently cold Rising

it's just that when the structure of the
dependent core Rising is sort of
weakened or sort of destabilized
that destabilizes what is possible
so

I I get what CEO version is getting at
although in order for anything at all to
exist it's dependently cool Rising
but it's not just like
um it's like unavoidable determinism
that the Buddha dismissed determinism
also

so you can't just have like this
mechanistic this necessarily causes this
which necessarily causes that that also

is rejected by Buddhism so dependent
origination is more subtle than that you
know it's a way of explaining how all
this stuff happens including
um this weird like synchronicities and
so forth

but it would be the weird
synchronicities would come like really
sort of like a weak spot in the in the
network of causes and conditions but
still it has its own causes and
conditions it's just that you know it's
it's more variable or something

I'm sorry I didn't answer that like with
total Mastery but it is kind of a weird
idea that I'd never really thought about
much before but anything that exists is

going to be

um anything that has a beginning and an
end is dependently Co-arising including
anything that arises through

um you know creating liminality through
violating taboos and so forth

so I'll just move on a nice question and
this is from Yugo I think that's how to
pronounced today people that ask

questions they got weird names sometimes
so anyway Yugo says tell me about the

karma that is conditioned by place I

find myself singing a specific song on a
specific

place in the city even though I was not
there for a long time ever encountered

such a phenomenon is that why Buddha can only arise on the Indian continent well the karma that is conditioned by place still I mean it's a mental state and so what would happen would be you know if you have certain mental States in a certain place

I assume that would just be that the conditions of that place are affecting your mind and your volitions which is then eliciting the song or whatever it is and there are some people that believe that places have their own Karma like the Middle East has just been a a battlefield you know since prehistoric times that's probably one reason why walled cities were invented in that

general area apparently

it is because people realize that if
they built walls around their Village
then they were less likely to get killed
by barbarians

so

in a case like that it's still the
mental States it's still I mean the
mental states are the karma and so
certain areas may have certain effects
on mental States

you know like a hot area may may cause
significantly different effects on
mental States than a cold area you know
like some Barren Wasteland is going to
cause significantly different mental

States than you know New York City
so there's going to be differences in
that regard and because we're all human
they might have similar effects on
humans in general
but um

I think that's that's how I would
explain it and then the next part of
this question here is that why Buddha
can only arise in the Indian continent I
think that the idea that Buddha can only
arise in an Indian culture is due to the
like the ethnocentric
ideas of the Indians who came up with
Orthodox Buddhism Buddhist tradition it
arose in India and it was just very
india-centric people were largely

ignorant of any other cultures existing outside of India they might have had a really hazy idea of Barbarian tribes on the borders like the the Persians and the the Greeks and

um certain like ironic people like um the cambodia's I think spoken Iranian language

so

um yeah I think the whole idea that the Buddha can only arise on the Indian continent is based on just the kind of ignorance of other continents that Jambu Deepa or India was considered to be essentially the center of the world and I think a lot of a lot of uh

a lot of cultures are similar you know
the Greeks considered Delphi to be the
center of the world I think the the
Romans eventually considered the
Mediterranean to be the center of the
world because Mediterranean literally
means middle of the world

so you know it's some Indian some
American Indian tribe in like what is
now Kansas probably considered you know
some Hill in Kansas to be the center of
the world

but I mean you could argue that
um a Buddha could only arise in
something like an Indian culture because
an Indian culture is a dharmic culture
but I'm skeptical of that I think a

Buddha could arise in a non-indian
culture

he might be called something other than
a Buddha though

because of course Buddha is
a word in an Indian language

so I'll just move on to you guys next
question are stories behind the dhamma

Paras

saying true because there are some
really unbelievable ones like the one
with pancakes I don't recall the the
dhamapada commentary story involving
pancakes but yeah I mean

from a western point of view it's
extremely unlikely that the dhamapada

commentary is objective history you know
you've got talking animals you've got
all this stuff going on just a lot of
it's like Aesop's Fables
and uh

I mean I assume a lot of stories in
there are based on true you know
historical events you know just
objectively true but for the most part
there's all this sort of magical
thinking and folklore stuff and adopting
stories from you know like earlier
Traditions incorporating them like like
the Janika stories are similar to The
Dom Apollo stories in certain ways and a
lot of them were like you know fables
that were already well known before the

Buddhist time they were sort of
recruited into Buddhism by just adding
on some Buddhism at the beginning and
some Buddhism at the end and turning it
into a Buddhist story was like a
Buddhist moral

so

yeah the demopolo in my opinion is
really not objective history I mean
you've got like animals with human
intelligence for example that I mean
I've had I've had Burmese monks try to
argue that in the Buddhist time animals
did have human intelligence but
I don't think so
so we'll just move on to the next

question and this is from the person who
used to have an easily pronounceable
name and now it's

c-h-r-z-a-s-z-c-z and then he added

another name after that which is

t-r-z-c-i-n-o-w-y and these might be

genuine Polish names or something but

I'm clueless with regard to how actually
to pronounce them

so

see true because that because this is

his first question is what happened to
your hand

Tyler Durden and I guess he noticed in

the last q a that I had a kind of a sore

on my hand it's almost healed now you

can still kind of see kind of a pinky

area there but no I didn't put lie on my hand and watch it burn my skin like in uh Fight Club it was uh I was digging up some posts that were in the ground with big Globbs of cement

like holding them in the ground and I was having to dig them up because we're going to put

um

like we were going to put gravel there and make it like a parking area for another car which we've already done but I was just like working with a shovel trying to get these things out of the ground and I got blisters on this hand because I wasn't wearing gloves

so I'll just move on to Insurance axis's
next question here

in the last q a you said that there are
no stupid questions they're just stupid
people care to share a few names for
example as a European I think your
former George W was an idiot and it's
just my personal opinion but if from 350
million Americans the best you can do is
George W or Trump or Hillary or Biden
then there is something wrong with your
country yeah well I mean that can apply
to just about any country I suppose it
is true that

um in recent decades we haven't had very
many presidents
that really are or have been top-notch

you know it's you could hardly say that
any president we've had you know in the
last hundred years

has been you know really the best
qualified person for the job that a lot
of even though America is supposedly a
largely a classless society you still
have a kind of ruling Elite and the bush
is definitely and Hillary Clinton you
know they kind of started their own
Syndicate or Dynasty or something and I
mean Trump was definitely among the the
financial Elite anyway
and

yeah Biden I mean and anyone who looks
at Biden with with like objectivity can

see that probably more than half the country would be more qualified to be the leader of of America than that guy especially nowadays when he's obviously senile

but the question is uh care to share a few names with regard to stupid people no I don't wanna I don't want to be naming stupid people here

they might be watching you know

so we'll just move on to the next

question and these are from Jeremy and

Jeremy just kind of sometimes he'll have

like a a running commentary as he's

watching the video he'll be typing in

stuff and it could be rhetorical

questions I don't know if Jeremy's

actually expecting answers from these questions

but what the hell there's question marks and it's in the comments to a q a video so what the hell Jeremy says entropy is an example of impermanence is it not this is from something I was saying um about oh reconciling like physics with dhamma

and uh yeah I'd say the entropy is a kind of impermanence in fact I read this book a long time ago where I was arguing that entropy is really what causes time to move in One Direction that you know because entropy always is moving in One Direction it's sort of like the the the

the arrow of time

that is causing time to move in a

certain direction so but that's that's

beyond dama that's Stephen abhidham

doesn't try to to account for the

passage of time

um yeah entropy would be an example of

impermanence yeah so I'll just move on

to Jeremy the next question

is not the Eightfold Path the method to

become enlightened is that not the path

to nibana or Enlightenment Exclamation

point Exclamation point Exclamation

point Exclamation point Exclamation

point question mark As far as I know it

is the only path to Enlightenment

exclamation point

well you can see there's a path that
like increases your odds of becoming
enlightened but the noble Eightfold Path
doesn't end the gates of Nirvana
the noble Eightfold Path is samsaric it
is sun in samsara and Nirvana is not so
there's no connection between this path
leading to samsara or this path that is
in samsara leading to Enlightenment
allegedly and Enlightenment itself
so it's like krishnamurti used to say
you can open the window but you can't
cause the wind to blow in and in the
suit is themselves like in the sunny
patanosuta you know it's there's no
guarantee you can if you practice Sadi

batana wholeheartedly for as little as
one week you're guaranteed of
Enlightenment or an advanced uh state
state of sagehood

so I mean even then there's really no
guarantee because it's going to be one
or the other according to the text
itself

so

yeah I'm reminded of nisargadata Maharaj
who really emphasized the idea that
there are no paths to Enlightenment that
you follow a path which if it's a good
path causes your mind to become clearer
and more subtle and to have fewer
attachments

but no matter how many times you sweep

the floor there's still going to be a little bit of dust I mean there's you're never going to get yourself completely absolutely perfect although that also is a terrible and heresy but the thing is you just have to get as clear as you can for finally the liberating insight to occur and some people will have to go farther down the path than others some people have to master forth John on before they can get enlightened sometimes most people probably even then won't get enlightened other people apparently don't have to practice meditation at all or if they do you know it's like first genre or

something and that's good enough like the whole mahasi method is based on the idea that you don't have to attain Janna or even access concentration in order to become enlightened they say that Kanika samadi momentary concentration is good enough

so that's that's kind of controversial that caused this big controversy back in the 1950s between like conservative Sri Lankan monks and the mahasi people

so you can say the Eightfold path is a method that facilitates becoming enlightened probably better than any other method

but still there's no guarantee

and if you follow that path you can

follow it forever and you're never going
to arrive at the the Pearly Gates of
nibono

he just followed the path until you
don't need to follow it anymore and then
you just let go of it

so we'll just move on to Jeremy's next
question

concerning science and Western thought
did the Buddha know the Earth was round
and if he didn't then does it matter to
me it does not when he teaches about the
mind that maybe when it comes to
cosmology or physical sciences I don't
know yeah did the Buddha know that the
Earth was round well technically the

Earth isn't even round I mean if you think in two Dimensions the Earth is pretty much flat you know it's kind of a lumpy curved surface maybe but in two Dimensions to say that it's flat isn't like really wildly wrong but if you think in three dimensions it's a sphere or roughly a sphere it's not perfectly spherical but what happens if you're thinking four dimensions you know you include time is the fourth dimension you've got this four-dimensional like a solid cylinder that's kind of blurry at both ends the first at the beginning end of the Earth it's coalescing dust and gases and so forth and then at the other end is being vaporized When the Sun Goes

Nova

or whatever whatever is going to happen
so you got this more or less solid earth
you know liquid metal core and so forth
but it's stretched out into this very
very long

kind of a twisty cylinder that's kind of
spinning and twisting through space like
a corkscrew Maybe

you get into five Dimensions you know
who knows it'd be sort of if

if like uh probability or like the fifth
and sixth Dimensions you might have like
this this this whole web work the Earth
is shaped like these multi-dimensional
cauliflower or something

so

but getting back to the question of
whether the Buddha knew the Earth was
around I mean who knows what the Buddha
knew

um I don't think it really matters
though because

um I mean the Earth isn't really around
because ultimately the Earth does not
exist as this discrete entity that it's
all based on delusion I mean the
samsaric universe is based on ignorance
so you get rid of the ignorance and it's
sort of like waking up from the Dream
It's the dream stays the dream I suppose
but uh

uh it's you're just not really involved

in that anymore

so I don't think it's really necessary
for him to know the samsaric details of
you know what the Earth is like and so
forth because it's ultimately illusory
anyway or based on delusion

so I I'd be surprised if the Buddha
could speak fluent Chinese

that kind of thing I mean according to
Orthodox tradition he knew whatever he
wanted to know so if a chinese Pilgrim
came to him he'd supposedly according to
the texts he would be able to speak with
him in fluent Chinese

but um yeah I really don't think
omniscience or Enlightenment really

works that way just because you're
enlightened doesn't mean you're going to
be able to figure out you know like
complex trigonometry
you know it's it just doesn't work that
way to some degree you just go along
with what your culture says and your
Enlightenment you know your your
eradication of delusion and ignorance is
at a whole different level that samsara
is just kind of irrelevant to that
you know you're seeing the Ultimate
Reality so what difference does it make
what this dream world is like
so I think I'll just move on to this
question this is from rui
we're already up to about an hour

rui says the Buddha dhama and his
various iterations entered the West Via
the intellectual cast and seems to be
mostly esconce there and sconce there do
you think this will remain so for the
foreseeable future

um the way yeah I mean that's the way
Buddhism traditionally has like taken
over other cultures or you know has
found its way into other civilizations
is mainly through the through the
intellectual class you know the
Intelligentsia and also just the ruling
class

so when monks start being you know
endorsed and favored and supported by

Kings and prime ministers and Generals
and so forth then they get their foot in
the door and then it's sort of a
top-down kind of a thing
and in the past it the top-down spread
of Buddhism worked because Buddhism was
you know it had it had adopted a lot of
traditional Indian beliefs
and
you know traditional Village People can
accept you know what was designed for
traditional Village People but in the
West
most westerners just aren't going to eat
up with a spoon like Jonica stories and
the Buddhist devotionism and so forth
some will you know there's always going

to be some that just by their
temperament that you know they're drawn
to something like that and you know they
might be that they're living on the edge
anyway

you know they're just something in their
personality just makes them reject
whatever is mainstream and want
something different

so

um Buddhism in the west does attract a
lot of sort of eccentric types as you
may imagine

um but in order for it to really be hit
become mainstream

there's gonna have to be something there

that is attractive to the average Joe
you know the guy who's working in a
plywood Mill

you know he's got bills to pay he's got
a wife and kids

um you're gonna have to have stuff in
Buddhism that a person who's not
particularly spiritual can just accept
as their religion you know sort of like
Christianity has done

and um yeah until that happens

and I doubt that it's going to be any
kind of Orthodox theravada or any kind
of Orthodox anything that exists as it
exists today

um you know otherwise you're going to
have what's already happening with

regard to teravada where you just gotta have some elements of Buddhism like like mindfulness techniques that just get absorbed into the culture and most of the recipe just gets ignored but that wouldn't really be called Buddha dhama it'd just be called you know certain elements of Buddha dama so yeah I think it will remain so for the foreseeable future until some kind of dumbed down or less spiritually exalted version of terrovata is devised or a Buddha dhama is devised that appeals to the average Joe and thus far it hasn't happened yet and I'm not sure what kind of form it would

take I assume there would have to be
some kind of charismatic innovator who
comes along preferably who is you know
highly attained who can come up with
something like that and you probably
have to be a Westerner

so let's just move on to the next
question this is from Rick

and Rick says what is your most prized
possession

and

I don't know this I've had a I've had
trouble with prized possessions before
I've had this this whole issue going on
with Pride's possession my most prized
possession because whatever is my most
prized possession gets destroyed

I remember a long time ago when I was in college

I found some clay by a Creek Bank this natural clay there and I got some of it and I fashioned this little pipe

you know for smoking controlled

substances and I made it just the way I wanted it and and then there was a kiln at work so I baked it in the Kiln it was just this was my most prized possession

it was just the perfect little pipe and

then one day my roommate and I were

smoking it and his girlfriend figured

he'd had enough so she tries to wrestle

it out of his hands and broke the thing

and that's just the way it has always

been with my most prized possession one time when I was in Burma just as a kind of defense against this I declared my most prized possession to be a plastic disposable razor cap that I stuck onto my Razor you know when I when I travel with it you know so the blade wouldn't knock up against things and that was my most prized position it was this really neat little thing that I was using on my Razor and then I was staying at in at this house in Rangoon and the servant girl there thought it was garbage and threw it away so even just out of self-defense I declare a plastic razor cap to be my most prized possession it gets destroyed

so I'm hesitant to declare anything my
most prized possession because it
becomes even more
subject to impermanence than the average
possession

although that Fez is damn good Fez

so let's move on to Rick's next question

what is your greatest or most persistent
fear I'm starting to think that Rick

here is some kind of agent

what is your greatest or most persistent

fear I ask Rick here have you ever read

1984

remember that scene where

uh Winston is in bed with his his

girlfriend Julia

you know they've got this place out in the pearl quarter where they they meet you know secretly they have these secret rendezvous and he's telling her what is most pers his most horrible fear and it turns out there's like a microphone like a view screen hidden in the room because the government's spying on him and then they use that

in when he's being tortured when he's being forced to be indoctrinated and so forth and so I mean you just don't blur it out in public what your most persistent fear is

I can't really can't think of much anyway but even if I could I'm not going to be like blurting it out for you know

the people at Google to to find out and
record and send to the government
whatever

so I'll just move on to the next
question and I just advise people just
don't tell anybody what your greatest or
most persistent fear is or actually all
right I'll do it my most my greatest
most persistent fear is to be
tied down spread eagle and to have a
beautiful woman with large breasts
smother me with their titties
which would have to be my sweetheart at
present
for the foreseeable future for the rest
of my life I trust

so I'll just move on the next question
here

this is also from Rick do either you or
your sweetheart desire to Bear a child
someday well we're getting a little too
old for that sort of thing I mean she is
still a child bearing age technically
but um

yeah I mean

having children I'm pushing 60.

so I'm getting a little too old even to
be a grandpa at this point

so yeah the uh the window for that was
opened and closed and neither of us took
advantage of that open window so we just
have each other plus a few dogs
and some really nice loaches out in the

pond out in the front yard

so I'll just move on to the next

question here

I've heard you talk about your father on
many occasions

can you give us a summary of your mother
and her influence on you well

I think my mother's main influence on me
has been genetic as you may imagine
that

physically and emotionally I take F more
after my mother's side of the family
whereas intellectually and spiritually I
take more after my father's side of the
family and my mother was spiritually a
child

you know she just she just didn't get it
you know she got her values from like
daytime TV shows crime dramas and so
forth

she watched a lot of TV she was a
conscientious mother she did her best
um you know I've she really I mean in in
her own way she was she was as good of a
mother as she could possibly be towards
my brother and me

um

but we started being on different
planets when I reached about the age of
13.

so

yeah I don't want to give like a
biography of my mama uh at this point

um mainly because there's so many
questions to uh answer

so yeah the main the main thing about
that is her influence on me was largely
genetic I've got a lot of her emotional
and physical traits

like long legs

this nose

so let's just move on to the next
question here

how did you go about becoming a
published author any advice for those
who may wish to publish a book well with
regard to the ones that

um caused money I just self-publish it
on Amazon and that's relatively easy to

do you can look that up just look up you
know Amazon self-publishing
and uh it's it's actually a pretty good
deal

that it's it's relatively Fair the way
they go about it

um with regard to my Attica Wagga
translation it was just

somebody who had connections with a
publishing firm well really liked it and
wanted it published and so they started
publishing it up until they found out
that I was just a heretical rascal and
so they pulled out of the deal after
publishing uh some sample copies

so I'll just move on to Rick's next
question

what are your thoughts on the story of Jesus it is written that pilate found no fault in him do you agree it's hard to say exactly what happened with in the like the trial of Jesus I think I've read that um

that the story was monkeyed with a bit in order to blame the Jews as the Christians were trying to distance themselves from the Old Testament Jews to some degree but it seems to me that Jesus was put to death by the Roman government as a political criminal it is a good chance I mean he was turned in by you know the Jews of the Sanhedrin but I think the Romans probably considered

anyone being declared King of the Jews
and on in according to the The Gospel
according to John I think uh there was a
sign on the top of his cross saying King
of the Jews and that's that's why he was
he was killed not because he was he was
claiming to be the Son of God I mean the
Romans really didn't care about that
sort of thing but anyone declaring to be
you know a king of this rebellious
group of Roman citizens or just Roman
Roman subjects

that anyone claim being claimed even if
he wasn't doing it himself if you've got
crowds of people considering him to be
this king of a province that the Romans
themselves were governing they weren't

going to put up with that so
he was killed as a political criminal
and uh crucifixion was uh a punishment a
capital punishment for Political
Criminals and also like Pirates and
bandits Renegades slaves like Spartacus
or at least the followers of Spartacus
so I mean what are my thoughts on the
story of Jesus I've I've written in like
multi-part blog posts and talked about
this on videos so I really I'm I mean I
could talk for half an hour on the story
of Jesus I mean it is interesting to me
that everyone whether you're a Christian
or not anyone in the west should read
the Bible just so you know what it is

you're rejecting at the very least it
has such a profound influence on Western
Civilization even for non-christians
so I just the bare minimum if what I
consider to be a likely Jesus his mother
was not a virgin

you know he had brothers and sisters he
was raised as a carpenter following his
Father's Footsteps and he was a
spiritually gifted person being a
carpenter in a small town just wasn't
doing it for him he heard about John the
Baptist out in the desert he goes out
and becomes like a disciple of John the
Baptist and Wiley's out there he has
this experience he has like this
Awakening experience and he finds that

he has psychic powers or the ability to do miracles

then John the Baptist is arrested Jesus very plausibly I think becomes the leader of the group after John the Baptist is gone

and then he's just not satisfied with being out here in this desert area he wants to go where the action is he wants to go and you know preach the the Kingdom of Heaven in the in the towns in The Villages and so forth so he you know goes his own way he's got followers like um I think it's the Gospel of John again who says that you know many of his disciples were originally Disciples of

John you know the other gospels say they were just fishermen mending their Nets and the Buddhists or Jesus says come with me and they just drop their Nets and follow him but according to the Gospel of John they were already Disciples of John the Baptist and then they switched over to Jesus when John the Baptist was arrested and decapitated and I do think that Jesus considered himself to be the Jewish Messiah not the Christian Messiah but the Jewish Messiah because it was just in the air you read like

um like the Book of Daniel which was written just less than 200 years before the time of Jesus

um and and also there's like all this apocalyptic literature that was in fashion around the Jesus's time and a little before Jesus's time that um it's like predicting that there's going to be this

um more of a spiritual Messiah than the old testament King Messiah the you know descendant of King David is going to rule Israel and Lead it to the foremost position among the Nations and so forth and I think that Jesus really because he was able to have these psychic powers and so forth I think there's a good chance he really did believe that he was the chosen one and then when he gets

crucified and realizes that he's not going to be leading the Nations like you know the Messiah was supposed to that's why he cried out my God my God why have you abandoned me

so that's uh that's it in a nutshell and I'll move on to uh Rick here's next question

it seems that you are at least somewhat familiar with the Bible can you talk about some things within the Bible that have been helpful to you on things that you or things that you agree with and also the contrary one of my favorite parts of the Bible that really isn't mentioned much in Buddhism but it's I think it's a good idea

there's I'm talking about the New
Testament here is that when you do good
deeds keep them a secret don't just go
around advertising your good deeds like
in Burma people donate something to a
monastery they've got like this plaque
with their name on it
and it's not the best idea you're better
off just
um you know almost like
um you know a thief conceals his actions
you know a person who's doing good to
him just just do it I mean you're not
doing it for Fame in this world you know
you're trying to be gathering up
Treasures in Heaven so to speak so I

mean God will know

you know and from the Buddhist under the
Christian point of view

so that's that's one thing that I really
like and the other things there have
been other things but they're just not
coming to mind right now

in regard to things that have not been
helpful

um I don't know if there have been any
teachings of the Bible old or New

Testaments that have been like harmful
to me

I mean there's most of it is just
irrelevant to me

I mean I really don't care what Mosaic
law is or you know the Exodus through

Sinai and all that I mean you know like
uh destroying the
the I don't know these different these
different tribes and their the names are
escaping me I'm malachites and so forth
I mean some of the the history is
interesting
and I mean some of the stories are
interesting but for the most part I
really didn't get a whole lot of wisdom
from reading the old or New Testaments I
mean the Old Testament if you condense
it down to one sentence
it's love the Lord thy God with all your
heart and all your soul and all your
strength or he will kill you and maybe

your family and neighbors too

I mean that's that's like the central message of the Old Testament as far as I can tell

so I'll just move on to the next

question here this is also from Rick and

I'm warning Rick that we may have to uh

limit the number of questions down to

like five just to keep this at a

manageable length

so his next question is how do we

reconcile the Buddha telling us to

wander alone like a rhinoceros into

Brave bugs and snakes and heat and rain

with the modern day monastic life which

is safe and social and vaccinated and as

you put it monks living like neutered

house cats well I mean you don't really
reconcile it I mean the way you
reconcile it is just acknowledging that
that a lot of Buddhism is in a
degenerate State and it probably has
been almost from the very beginning
that you know the the cushy monastic and
cloistered life which pulls a monk out
of the one wandering through the forest
and just gives him you know free room
and board and he knows where his next
meal is coming he knows where he's going
to sleep that night everything's easy
for the most part unless he's really
still trying to meditate at least
yeah I mean I mean that's just human

nature that you've got the middle path
between self-indulgence and self-torture
most people including most monks are
going to be straying towards the
self-indulgent side

so I mean if you want to reconcile that
in a positive way you just uh
acknowledge that you know the cushy the
monks who are just kind of lazy and
living an easy life you know they're
there but you don't have to do it that
way you can really

try do your best to follow what it says
in the texts and you know live alone in
the forest and just diligently practice
you know Falls one year rules and so
forth

so that'll be that'd be how you
reconcile them I suppose I mean you're
not gonna

I mean you don't just necessarily live
the way they live you know because
really I think that was one of the the
most effective parts of the Monk's life
in the Buddhist time was just throwing
yourself at the mercy of the universe
and just wandering around in a
predominantly non-buddhist although
still spiritual culture and you know
you're dealing with all this stuff you
know Bandits and tigers and malaria and
all this stuff that's going on
and I mean just having to maintain

equanimity

in in this really dire situation

sometimes I think that would be one of
the strongest aspects of Buddhist
practice

and probably one of the strongest
aspects of early Christian practice when
Jesus is telling his disciples just
wander around and just hit something
just wander around with no money and so
forth

so

that'd be my answer to that moving on to
Rick's next question

as a Layman do you still refrain from
killing bugs and pests do you think it
really matters either way or has the

principle been taken too far after all mosquitoes are the number one killer of human beings apparently responsible for over 700 000 human deaths per year is it fair to say that we didn't make the rules of the game and that we are natural enemies

some would argue that killing mosquitoes saved human lives yeah I mean I've had full super malaria seven or eight times I'd be dead seven or eight times over if it wasn't for the the magic of modern day Pharmaceuticals

um as a Layman I do occasionally kill parasitic insects that's the only beings whose lives I take willingly and and

willfully his parasitic insects

um which includes and sometimes because

they infest the kitchen sometimes

I'll just squish one with my finger if I

see it on the counter

um

and one reason for that is in a way it's

it's like an Indian cultural thing

uh and another thing is I mean it's it's

nice if you're able to not kill any

beings but if you're a lay person living

in the world let's say you've got a kid

that's got lice in his hair I mean

you're gonna you have to do something

about that even monks that have

intestinal worms you know they'll still

take something to get rid of the

intestinal worms you know you have to
look after yourself even a monk is
allowed to strike out in self-defense
so I mean as a Layman you know I'm a man
I do have you know the right to defend
myself

and just prevent my kitchen from
swarming with ants for that matter

so

um yeah I do kill the occasional insect
it's not like a daily occurrence or
anything but one reason why I really
don't think it's all that horrible I
don't think anyone's gonna go to hell
for that

is that I do have a degree in biology

and I know that insects and other
arthropods

just do not have a nervous system like
ours apparently they do not feel pain or
fear

like I've told this story before I used
to work on Japanese ships as a Fisheries
observer in the Bering Sea before I was
a monk and

um you know on some ships I'd have a
holding tank for crabs if a crab came up
that I put it in this holding tank until
I had time to like you know measure it
and weigh it say what species what what
sex

and we'll sit gender

yeah and it's viability see if it was

like likely to live you know if it had arms or legs broken off that kind of a thing and sometimes a crab would come up that had almost all of its legs broken off you know I have like one leg on one side and two legs on the other side and it's still alive you toss it into the the holding tank it's full of seawater and it just kind of moves around if it sees a piece of squid bait you know a piece of piece of raw squid down there it'll just stop and start eating it it's like it doesn't really care but it just had most of its legs crushed and ripped off

I mean you do that to a mouse you rip

off three of a mouse's legs you hold a little cracker in front of it it's just going to go into convulsions and die it's not going to want to eat anything but insects and like Crustaceans and so forth it's like they don't feel pain it just doesn't seem to bug them no pun intended

a mosquito or a fly will fly away if you're trying to slap it but that's just like an automatic reflex sort of like the the door at the grocery store opening when you walk towards it you know the door doesn't get out of your way because it's afraid of you it's just programmed to do that so it's not like I'm uh endorsing the

killing of insects if you can go without
killing insects you can go without
killing living beings that's fine I mean
you know if it's a nice mostly like
if it's a cockroach or a spider or
something you know it's just one you
know I'll catch it with a cup and then
like a piece of cardboard and let it go
outside

but um I do have the right to defend
myself

and also it's sort of a man's duty to
deal with the icky bugs and stuff when
you've got a woman that doesn't want to
deal with icky bugs

so yeah I freely admit that I

occasionally kill an insect and even
when I was a monk I occasionally killed
an insect on purpose

so let's just move on to the next
question here what are your thoughts on
the practice of circumcision

well I'm circumcised I won't show you no
worries

but

um yeah I was circumcised I think most
guys in America of my generation have
been circumcised

um I really am kind of neutral on the
subject I really don't have an opinion
about it one way or the other to tell
you the truth

um yeah I really don't care

so I'll just move on to the next
question

do you see a similarity between Catholic
monastic life and Buddhist monastic life

it seems rather unnatural to isolate

oneself with the same sex and live a

celibate life do you think there is some

possible common root or perhaps

Catholicism borrowed from earlier

Eastern tradition or did they spring up

entirely separate well it's hard to say

for sure I think

Buddhism did have some effect on Western

religion this very indirectly Maybe

that um you know there were Buddhist

missionaries

that were sent by Ashoka into the the
Hellenistic world

you know the Greek Greek speaking world
of the West also

um Alexandria Egypt they have found like
Little Buddha Buddha images and stuff

there because you had trade routes
between India and the Roman Empire

coming through Alexandria

and almost certainly you'd have

practicing in Buddhists from India

living there and so probably they knew

about Buddhism at least maybe not the

average person living in a village in

Gaul or something but you know like the

intelligent educated people probably had

at least heard of Buddhism there were

some Greek philosophers who traveled to
to India and came back and uh

so

whether Catholic monastic quarters got
their ideas from

um Buddhism and to what extent I mean
it's possible I don't think there's any
way of proving it one way or the other

but it is it is a possibility

and uh isolate oneself with the same sex
and live a celibate life is unnatural

but then again if you're trying to
escape from the natural world and enter
into you know some Transcendent State
you pretty much have to go against
nature to a large degree so it is

possible they just came up with this stuff independently I think there were some Jewish sects you know there were the essenes there was another group called The therapeutia something like that

who uh

they uh they may have they were like quasi-monastic orders you know they were celibate and so forth

and also like some of the first like Christian ascetics where the desert fathers of Egypt

and you know that's close to Alexandria

Alexandria was in Egypt so it could be that there was some some Buddhist influence but you can't really say for

sure so I'm just going to move on to the next question here and this question is from moo 88

and moo 88 says what is the funniest thing you experience while living in Burma

and that's hard to say I mean I mean with regard to laughing hard probably the hardest I ever laughed I mean this may be kind of a disappointment you know for people expecting something exotic

but I think the hardest I've ever laughed when I was a monk in Burma was when there was another American monk who would come to hang out with me or I'd go

to hang out with him and we just tell
some joke

and and that would be it like uh

remember one time he was he was talking

about having a nervous stomach in the

shits and I just said that's that's

actually a good name for a rock band you

know nervous stomach in the shits and

for some reason we just happen to be in

the kind of mood where he starts

laughing and then I start laughing and

the next thing you know we just can't

stop laughing we're like holding our

bellies because we're laughing so hard

even though maybe it wasn't the funniest

joke in the whole world it's just you

have to be in a certain mood when you're

living in a kind of relative sensory deprivation anyway you're kind of always restrained things are funnier like you may recall like when you're a kid something happened somebody says something at school something happens at school you think it's hilarious everyone's laughing then you come home and tell it to your family and they don't laugh because when you're at school you know you have to take everything more seriously so that when something funny does happen it seems even funnier than than usual so that would have to be it I mean we don't really have time for this but

uh I could tell you the scariest thing
that ever happened that that would I'd
have a relatively good exotic answer for
that one but the funniest thing that
ever happened just hanging out with
another American Monk and and just
telling jokes and just laughing our
asses off sometimes because I mean that
was with regard aside from that
I I don't know what it would be
because as a general rule the life of a
forest-dwelling monk isn't particularly
funny
I'd have to really rack my brains and we
don't have time you don't want me
sitting here for five minutes like
scratching my engine no

so I'm just gonna move on to the next question which is from White Ash Piper and white ash Piper says have you ever heard the one where a Chan monk or hermit left his Hut for a moonlit stroll so a thief enters his Hut only to find nothing of value and just then the hermit monk returns catching the thief the thief says forgive me so the hermit monk gave him his robe and the thief left naked the monk sits and says if only he stayed I would have given him the moon poof and yeah I'm familiar with the story in fact it's I don't know if this is where white ash Piper found it but I found that story in a book called

Zen flesh Zen bones

which is compiled by Paul reps and it's probably this book that converted me to Buddhism which some people may find ironic because it's Zen Buddhism and not taravana but I was originally interested in Zen

and it's right here

it's not a very long story

it's on page 32

says ryokan a zen master lived the simplest kind of life in a little Hut at the foot of a mountain one evening a thief visited the Hut only to discover there was nothing in it to steal ryokon returned and caught him you may have come a long way to visit me he told the

prowler and you should not return
empty-handed please take my clothes as a
gift the thief was bewildered he took
the clothes and slunk away ryokon set
naked railcon sat naked watching the
moon poor fellow he mused I wish I could
have given him this beautiful moon
the end

so we'll just move on to White Ash

Piper's next question

Have you listened to many or any nde
testimonials on YouTube and nde is a
near-death experience seems that we
really never do die just dropping out of
costumes well I have don't recall seeing
many if any near-death experience

testimonials on YouTube but I have read
a lot in books

and so yeah I've read books on the
subject

so even though I haven't uh
haven't listened to many testimonials on
YouTube if any

um yeah I'm familiar with quite a few of
them including uh I always John Ren
Lewis who actually had a kind of
Enlightenment or Awakening experience as
a result of the near death experience he
was like this hard hard ass atheist
scientist

who was like president of some atheist
Society or something then he has this
near-death experience and when he comes

out of it he's he's like Eckhart Tolle
so

yeah I mean near-death experiences they
they do have certain common features and
you know skeptical materialistic
scientific types will try to explain
them away but

um you know it's it's hard to explain
away

so I guess I'll just uh I guess I
answered that question well it's it's
just kind of a no because I haven't
listened to nde testimonials on YouTube
so I'll just move on to the next
question which is from Austin
and Austin says how do you let go of

strong attachments such as love

well first of all I would say that love
is not necessarily an attachment at all
that really the essence of Love is
acceptance

but when you accept somebody you know
it's like this yes and that's like
expansive you know it's sort of your
Consciousness expands with yes and kind
of contracts with no and people get
attached to this feeling of of Joy or
happiness or just you know expansion
expansiveness

um also what is generally called
romantic love throughout the world is
not so much spiritual love is it's like
a an animal mating Instinct in the human

animal

so that has a lot of attachment and it's very conditional you know true genuine spiritual love is unconditional but romantic love is always got certain conditions you know I'll love you so long as you don't gain 100 pounds I'll love you so long as you stay faithful to me you know that kind of stuff I'll love you so long as you know you communicate well with me you know that kind of a thing

so that uh one of my favorite spiritual teachers who is still alive I trust he's getting pretty old though Paul Lowe says that when someone says I love you what

it usually means is my Neurosis feels
comfortable with your behavior

so

with regard to Austin's question here
how do you let go of strong attachments
such as love the only way to let go of
strong attachments is to perceive them
in a different way that you have to
you have to be able to change your
perception

so if you change your perception about
something it can it will change your
behavior

but so long as your beliefs and your
perceptions remain essentially the same
your behavior is going to remain
essentially the same and if you're

attached you're going to stay attached
so it's like the story I told about my
father where he kept trying to stop
smoking he kept trying and trying you
know he'd smoke two packs a day and he'd
stop and then gradually he'd start like
chewing a little tobacco or smoking a
pipe every now and then next thing you
know he's back to two two packs a day
until

one of his legs started turning black
he went to a doctor and the doctor told
him that because of an accident he had
had used previously there was a lot of
capillary damage in that leg and those
damaged capillaries were getting plugged

up with tar

and that if my dad didn't stop smoking they're gonna have to amputate the leg so he had to choose did he want to stop smoking and have two legs or did he want to keep smoking and have one leg and when it came down to that his perception changed so radically with regard to smoking that it was I mean it was still you still have the The Addictive urges and so forth but it was much easier to say nope nope not gonna do it you know all you have to do is think about having his leg amputated and it's it works that way with regard to lots of things I mean you don't have to have it just that in your face usually

you have to like learn

they may be through meditation you have
an Insight or you just learn more on the
subject

you know it's like maybe you really like
fried chicken until somehow you see a
documentary about how factory farm
chickens are raised and that just
poisons your mind against eating chicken
that actually happened to me I don't
like chicken nearly as much anymore
because I've seen these documentaries on
how chickens are raised in these factory
farms and it's horrible you know it's
like

uh or chickens are raised it's like a

concentration camp it's a concentration
camp for chickens so eating a chicken is
practically the same as eating a Jew
so I'll just move on to Austin's next
question

he says so I had asked a mahasi Seattle
monk should we ever attempt at one point
in this meditation on the breath or
stomach without using labels
isn't labeling merely a
conceptualization of the experience
itself he has said quote your question
misunderstands the nature of reality one
pointedness is only for a moment and
noting is
designated for straightening the mind on
the experience the idea of one

pointedness is wrong because the question assumes one pointedness is longer than a moment the only one pointedness you can have is momentary and the noting helps with that by staying focused on the experience for that one moment that exists giving you a better relation to the experience this kind of question makes me think you haven't tried to practice or given it much of a chance because this is just conjecture and it's wrong anyone who has practice mindfulness for a period of time will be able to tell you it doesn't do what you say it does Mantra meditation is very powerful and

the only meditation is that our object
is something real and momentary unquote
thoughts on this seeing as you have
practiced mindfulness well

I think this mahasi monk is just sort of
kind of got tunnel vision in favor of
the mahasi method because I mean for one
thing he's claiming that when you note
something it helps you do to be aware of
that moment

and kind of one pointedly but I mean
that's not true at all by the time you
get around to noting what has arisen I
mean you've got like trillions of million
moments mind moments have already passed
I mean his idea that you're going to be
noting an object at the same moment that

you are aware of it

I mean that's just wildly inaccurate
which kind of sheds a little doubt on
his own insights from from meditation
um one pointedness

yeah it doesn't I mean when it's talking
about one pointedness in the sutra is
it's not implying that the one
pointedness lasts only for a moment
that I mean you're you're like
maintaining the one point in this that's
like you're you're really good at
meditation if you can maintain it but
even one point in this or akagata is the
the polyup version or the poly of it
um it doesn't necessarily mean one point

it is it can also mean just unified your
mind is Unified in a sense it's it's
more accuracy it's unified because then
you're not dealing with your mind being
contracted down this one little
minuscule point
it's just Unified
so
yeah I think
yeah you're better better off I mean
just remember what he said but don't
necessarily consider him to have been
like 100 accurate
that he's biased in favor of the mossy
method and as
a very relatively wise Burmese Seattle
Seattle

told me once I almost asked him what is
your opinion of the masi method and he
said you can get benefit from practicing
it but it is a limited method I mean
you're not going to get extremely very
far practicing the mossy method once you
start getting up into intermediate
levels

you're better off switching methods
that you're not going to get very
Advanced from practicing the mahasi
method or at least that's my opinion
also the opinion of Seattle
so

yeah I mean

with regard to the whole question here

is I mean

let's see here Austin

is asks a monk if it's you you ever get
to a point in your mindfulness where you
stop noting and some mahasi monks will
say yes

but a lot of mahasi monks will say no
you just have to keep sticking labels
onto it you know like breathing or it's
like uh

is expanding Contracting expanding
Contracting like the main mahasi method
is you're observing your abdomen
expanding and Contracting as you breathe
and that you never stop thinking
you know pain a pound a pain day
pounding or expanding Contracting

expanding Contracting Rising falling

Rising falling and I mean it creates

um

it's it's like separating you from the

experience

you know if you're if you're

concentrating on Rising falling then

you're not really concentrating on

what's actually happening you're you're

at least some of your attention is

distracted by the words Rising falling

so

um when you're when your concentration

gets good enough that you don't need to

use the labels as a way of like keeping

your mind busy and sticking it to the

object so it doesn't wander away when
your mind stops wandering away not
consistently then you can get rid of the
labels and just observe the phenomena
themselves and you're getting closer to
Ultimate Reality going with
Orthodox tarabana itself that Rising
falling are not ultimate realities but
you know the sensations that you are
experiencing according to abhidham at
least according to Orthodox are
ultimately real
so you're getting closer to Ultimate
Reality by doing away with the labeling
labeling is like an elementary practice
it may be necessary at first just to
keep your mind from wandering away from

the object because if your mind has got a lot of energy and is restless you've got to have an energetic kind of meditation to use up the mind's energy but then when your mind starts getting quieter

then you don't need to keep labeling things you know it's just you're getting you just stubbornly sticking to the ABCs instead of moving on to the next level of practice

so

yeah I wouldn't take this masi Mark too seriously

so we'll just move on to Austin's next question what are your thoughts on Zen I

remember from a previous video that you spoke quite highly of it even mentioning Zen flashes and bones who happens to be a very good book Zen appeals to me too particularly the concept of form being empty and emptiness being form which I find to be a fundamentally true statement however I must admit that I have reservations about embracing the bodhisattva path it seems rather dubious and not something I could personally take up on a different note I think it would be interesting if Tara bottoms Incorporated some aesthetic qualities inspired by Zen temples maybe a Zen Terra Vada blend would be something quite appealing and beautiful

yeah I think Zen Aesthetics are largely Japanese Aesthetics just very this kind of Stark just uh was it wabito Sabi it's this sort of austere and just elegant Simplicity a lot of black and white um yeah I think that might be a Japanese thing more than a necessarily A Zen thing but getting what are my thoughts on Zen

yeah I was originally attracted to Zen um until I learned more about taravada and realize that teravada comes closer to what the Buddha originally taught but Zen itself is sort of a return towards what the Buddha originally taught to some degree because Zen is the Japanese

word the Japanese version of Chan and
Chan is the the Chinese version of the
Sanskrit word Jonna which originally
meant just meditation so Zen is the
meditation school and it emphasizes this
direct experience over all the the
labels and lists and categorizations and
so forth that other schools of Buddhism
just wallow in to some degree
so the the thing that turned me away
from Zen is you read about Zen like you
read Zen flesh Zen bones here
and it seems like these men dressed in
black standing around speaking in
riddles and occasionally hitting each
other with sticks and that appealed to
me but then I went to a real Zen

Monastery and it was all mixed in with
pure land stuff and all this chanting
and bowing and just ceremonies and so
forth

that didn't appeal to me at all I've
never really been into and I don't want
to say empty ceremonies but just
Ceremonies for ceremonies sake
ceremonies just because that's what
you're supposed to do like in terravonna
you have a ceremony it has a purpose you
know it's like the Sangha comes together
to you know recite the padimoka or to
ordain somebody or to like
um like make official a new
ecclesiastical boundary or making

confession that kind of a thing there's
always like a like a a practical purpose
for it

whereas in Zen it's it's a lot of it is
just Zen

um the Ceremonies for ceremonies sake
and a lot of taravada you know they've
got the chanting and and that sort of
thing that um

I mean I never really liked that kind of
stuff much either

so I just kind of went alone like the
Horn of the Rhinoceros

but yeah I mean Zen does accept a lot of
Mayana stuff it's it's a it's a
technically a Mayana uh it's a form of
Mahayana Buddhism

so they've got the body side of a
concept they've got you know sort of the
mythological you know gods and Buddhas
and bodhisattvas and so forth that um I
really don't have a whole lot of use for
but just the essential practice of it is
very similar to the essential practice
of

early Buddhism except without so much
wandering you know they're they're
staying in in monasteries mostly because
once you get into China
wandering vagrant Beggars just they
really did not have the same uh respect
that they had in India and so they had
to become like farmers and farm their

own food they couldn't just beg for
their food

even silently

so see where was I

kind of lost myself on that one

um

oh it's gonna say something oh yeah even
even like Roman Catholicism that you get

into the advanced contemplative

techniques like Saint John the cross

writes about and it becomes similar to

early Buddhism in many respects just the

practices of mindfulness and

concentration and so forth

um so it's like the Theory May differ

you know significantly at the lower

levels but the higher up you go and you

do less and less thinking less and less
labeling less and less categorizing than
if they are relatively enlightened
systems they're going to be converging
and Zen and early Buddhism and even to
some degree uh some like monastic
Christian orders you know they're
they're doing the same thing

so

um

so at the top top level Zen and early
Buddhism are comparable but at the lower
levels early Buddhism are like terravada
for example especially the earlier
strata of terravonna comes closer to
what the Buddha was teaching at lower

levels

so there is that

so I think I should just move on to the next question because I really need to answer these questions in a timely manner

and so Austin's next question I think we're still on Austin here please

forgive me if I've misnamed you I recall you mentioning that you've been to Japan three times as a monk I'm curious about your impressions of Japanese Buddhism particularly the aspects such as monks being allowed to marry consume alcohol engage in cooking and cleaning duties and following a straight and vegetarian lifestyle additionally I'm interested in

knowing what kind of conversations or debates you had with Japanese Mahayana amongst during your visits okay well I'll answer the last part a lot first and that is I never had any conversations or debates with Japanese Mahayana monks the thing was when I went to Japan I was staying at a terravada monastery in Japan that was it was founded by Japanese people but they wanted to get back to you know

um

early Buddhism which they equated with taravada so there were some Japanese Buddhists who converted to taravana and they invited uh Burmese Seattle's

including uh one or two agamaha panditas
if you don't you don't know what that is
that's why but it's a very high
ecclesiastical Rank and they really
wanted me to come just because I was a
foreigner you know I was sort of the
example of a non
Southeast Asian who successfully had
been ordained in a terror bottom
tradition or some such
and uh
so

yeah I just was living in this terrible
and bubble within within Japan
and uh I was very disappointed recently
when I found out that the Kamakura
Buddha wasn't isn't even supposed to be

go to My Buddha you know it's it's one of the mythological Buddhists like amitaba or something there's this huge standing Buddha statue in Japan also we went to I knew that one wasn't going to My Buddha I really wasn't that interested yet but um that's just a young monk being kind of bigoted and Prejudiced against Mahayana mythological Buddhas um so I just I need to go over this question a little better here um I'm curious about your impressions of Japanese Buddhism particularly the aspects such as monks being allowed to marry consume alcohol

Etc well that was like it was called the Meiji restoration which started in the late 1800s and the powers that be you know including the emperor um decided that if Japan was going to be a like a an industrial power that can compete with the West they're gonna have to become less religious and so they drafted a lot of monks into the army so they could fight the Russians and um you know they melted down temple bells and turned into like shell casings and cannons and stuff and they they secularized the Buddhist monkhood in Japan in order to westernize the the country and allow Japan to become like a

colonial power like you know England or
France

so that's I mean that's the reason for
it

and uh the next part of the question

here is I just didn't have any

conversations or debates with Japanese

Mahayana monks

which is just as well I guess I really

don't speak hardly any Japanese so I

couldn't have done it in Japanese anyway

I did uh give a couple of dama talks the

first one was very well received and

then the second one I deviated from

Orthodox terramata sufficiently that um

the founder of the monastery was very

upset and uh I mean they were they were
very troubled by my my Dharma talk
because

um I just was too western or something
in my point of view I wasn't Orthodox
enough to suit them

because there are Buddhists including
taravada Buddhists who just cling to the
dogma and to the extent that you deviate
from that Dogma you are wrong

and I really I really don't swing that
way I mean you have to follow your
unconscious follow your own best
understanding you don't have to believe
in talking animal stories just because
it's there in the book

so I'll just move on to the next

question here

how does the Buddhist conception of suffering intersect with existentialist thought and the examination of The Human Condition well it's interesting that uh one book that I read a long time ago was by

um an eccentric English monk named Jana Veera who has probably way more followers now than he did when he was alive he wound up committing suicide in 1965 but he was an existentialist philosopher he was talking existentialism throughout like in his letters his collected letters you know he was really into like Kierkegaard who

was proto-existentialist I guess he had
no use for Carl Jaspers but he was
familiar with him FH Bradley technically
wasn't an existentialist I guess but I
mean he was just really he was into
Sartre Camus and all this stuff and you
know he just looked at Buddhism through
an existentialist lens and then what he
was doing was he was saying the
existentialists are essentially right
but but it doesn't existentialism
doesn't lead to nibana it just leads to
despair essentially or
it leads to mysticism that's why he
hated Carl Jaspers because Carl Jaspers
was a was a an existentialist who turned
to mysticism as a kind of way out of the

Dilemma of existentialism

and Nana Vera was such an

intellectual such a rationalist he just

hated mysticism he didn't understand it

because a lot of intellectuals just

can't understand mysticism because

they're just so locked into an

intellectual approach that dismissing

the intellect they just couldn't do it

it'd be like dismissing themselves

but let's see

yeah so I mean according to Nana Vera

existentialism is like

terrible Buddhism in many many respects

except terrible Buddhism leads to

Enlightenment and existentialism doesn't

you just get to a certain point and you
just stop in despair

so

I guess I answered that one I hope I
answered that one because I'm not going
to answer it no more and I'm moving on
to the next question here which is how
does the Buddhist concept of emptiness
Challenge essentialist and
substantialist views of existence found
in Western philosophy well I mean I
assume that essentialists and
substantialist views of existence imply
that that entities are ultimately real
or at least the essence of which they
are composed is ultimately real sort of
like maybe in Spinoza he had like this I

can't remember what it was called
being or something like that it was it
was like what mind and matter are both
based on it was like an uh kind of
essence or substance that underlay both
mind and matter and word the same he's
trying to unify mind and matter you know
he's trying to say the mind and matter
are just two aspects of the same thing
which was kind of kind of interesting
although I think he wasn't exactly
correct in some of his surmises like
that the entire body thinks instead of
just the brain that kind of a thing I
mean to some degree maybe you know the
heart kind of has an influence on the

mind and so forth but

I think you could cut off your finger
and still you'd have the same amount of
Consciousness which Spinoza didn't
believe

um

so yeah I mean how does the Buddhist
concept of emptiness Challenge
essentialists and substantialist views
of existence found in Western philosophy
and you just say that I mean the essence
and the substance are just
their condition and their essentially
conditional they're not ultimately real
you know they are dependent upon
something else and when the something
else that they're dependent upon ceases

the substance or the essence itself of
you know what what the Western
philosopher says is ultimately real or
whatever that also ceases
um and even when it hasn't ceased yet
especially if you go with like
mahayana's philosophy like majamaka you
know it's it's just virtually real it's
not ultimately real it's you know it's
essentially empty of any like inherent
essence
at least any inherent Essence that you
can identify that you can put your
finger on
so
yeah that's kind of a a dense and deep

question and I just do not have time
to answer it in full length especially
because there's

I mean I'm already up to about the 10th
question here of this is Austin right

Yeah Austin

so I'll just move on to the next
question here

also by Austin what insights did you
come to in Burma regarding the nature of
Consciousness subjective experience in
the mind and body problem

well I think one of the most important
insights that I had in Burma as a
meditator is that when you finally get
to the point in your meditation where
you're not thinking anymore you're wide

awake and your mind is just clear like
glass

that you realize that you're still
you're more awake than you were before
your mind just doesn't stop when you
stop thinking you know it's it's not
like you go into a coma

so I mean it's you realize you stop
identifying with your thoughts nearly so
much when you realize that you know
there's still you know some Essence
apparent virtual Essence to you that is
still there in some respects even more
so when you stop thinking
oh see what else

the Mind Body problem I really don't see

is a problem at all because I don't
believe that physical matter is
ultimately real

so

so yeah I've probably had that belief
since before I went to Burma so I guess
the main Insight I had in Burma with
regard to what Austin here is talking
about the nature of Consciousness and so
forth is that when you stop thinking you
don't stop existing you don't stop being
conscious that you can just sit there
wide awake with your mind clear like
glass and you know in some ways you're
more real and more there and more awake
and more conscious than you were when
you were thinking that would be the main

one so we'll just move on to Austin's
next question how does the Buddhist
concept of emptiness challenge our
conventional understanding of identity
individual individuality and the
boundaries between self and other in
relation to right and wrong I recall DT
Suzuki making an intriguing statement
about World War II regarding the
illusion of Maya he suggested that if
one remains entangled in this illusion
perceiving oneself as an agent The Act
of Killing another person by say
stabbing them in the eye is seen as
morally wrong however when one
transcends this conventional reality and

becomes a passive Observer the
perspective shifts in this Transcendent
State the perception changes and the act
of stabbing a knife in someone's eye is
no longer seen as me performing the
action instead it becomes a cosmic dance
a phenomena where my knife seems to
dance around and in the intricate
choreography of the universe your eye
happens to encounter it
well there's a lot I could unpack in
this uh first of all DT Suzuki I mean he
was very pro-japan during World War II
and he was endorsing a kind of Samurai
Buddhism which probably accounts for him
like saying that you know if you're in
sort of a Zen State when you're stabbing

someone in the eye you're kind of off
the karmic hook but yeah early Buddhism
definitely I mean the Buddha definitely
denounced that kind of thinking there
were philosophers in the Buddhist time
there was one I didn't remember which
one it was who said that you could you
could walk up and down the banks of the
Ganges walk with like a razor like a
razor disc and like a discus with a
razor edge and just leave heaps of
bleeding flesh you know all up one One
Bank of the Ganges and then come back
down the other side leaving heaps of
bleeding flesh you know just killing
everything in your way and you won't

have any bad karma for it that you know
it doesn't exist I I guess Suzuki's
refining that a little bit by saying if
you know if you have the right mental
state you can just kill people and you
know you're you're sort of in a state of
like karmic voidness or something
but I mean really it's sort of like the
sociopath I was mentioning earlier that
at deeper levels you know what you're
doing you know that you are causing
suffering or at least that suffering is
being caused and you know it's the
volition's generated by you that are
causing that and it's gonna I mean this
there's still Karma you don't just
detach yourself from Karma even an aura

hunt even though he's not making any new Karma you know old karma is still there so let's see here how does the Buddhist concept of emptiness challenge our conventional understanding of identity individuality and the boundaries between self and other in relation to right and wrong

well the Buddhist concept of emptiness challenges our conventional understanding of identity and individuality and the boundaries between self and other and that Buddhism just teaches that there is no self that that a self is conventional but even so the universe the the samsaric universe even

if it's not ultimately real it's a
structure composed of of
Karma like like I think it was the very
first question that in a sense you can
say the world the entire Cosmos is
karmic

so I mean theoretically possible for an
enlightened being I mean like some of
the stories about Padma sambhava who was
uh an Adept from like a tantric Adept I
think he originally came from India and
then moved to Tibet but he's he's
considered to be like a second Buddha in
Tibet where you know he would do all
this outrageous stuff you know eating
human flesh and you know he would
occasionally kill people

like one the one story that comes to
mind he's he's dancing up on a flat roof
and he kicks a rock and The Rock comes
down and kills somebody and it's like it
was their karma you know I'm just up
here dancing so what
you know and then he might say because
he was an Adept you know it was this
Karma that they committed in some past
life or something that that resulted in
their own dying but you know he was sort
of absolving himself of any karmic
agency in doing that and I mean it's
conceivable I suppose but it's certainly
not orthodox terravonna
and again I think DT Suzuki was uh

making these statements in a way of sort
of

um justifying Japanese soldiers stabbing
people in the eye which they did a lot
they did some really awful stuff during
World War II and before World War II
so

I guess maybe I answered the question
how does the Buddhist concept of
emptiness challenge our conventional
understanding

well I mean the Buddhist concept of
emptiness is mainly a Mahayana concept
in in terravada emptiness really doesn't
get nearly as much uh mentioned there is
just no self you know anata
so

yeah I mean anata definitely uh
challenges our conventional
understanding of identity individuality
and the boundaries between self and
other because there is no self
so I'll just move on to the next
question here this is from Garrett
two hours man
this is from Garrett
and Garrett says please pardon any in
all ignorance what are the cons in
practicing and ordaining in a Zen
tradition in your archaic Buddhism
series if remembering correctly
the real houseu does
sounded zen

I'm asking this is someone on the path
and considering ordination the
bodhisattva Bell seems like the obvious
downside

but if that were put aside what other
negatives am I missing
well

um I've already mentioned this to some
degree like a lot of Zen has
incorporated pure land Buddhist elements
and I got no use at all for Pure land
Buddhism I really do not consider pure
land Buddhism to have been taught by
godama Buddha that is in some respects
the exact opposite of what godama Buddha
was teaching like the Buddha was
teaching get enlightened in this life if

you possibly can whereas Mahayana in general and especially pure land is just saying nope don't do that just maybe you can't even do that anymore because we're in the Kali Yuga or something so you know pray to this other Buddha that's not mentioned in the earliest texts that you get reborn in his pure land or so some such

um also some of the some of the Zen stuff like like I mentioned before all the there's so much chanting and bowing and ceremonies and so forth It's become very encrusted with ceremony even though it's like a crust surrounding just this empty hollow center in a sense that's in

in a good sense

I mean the more emptiness you've got the better I think unless you're just like you need some kind of substance to occupy your mind

um otherwise it's just going to be like wandering and just getting lost going in all directions

so thinking about being ordained in a Zen tradition you know make sure that it's it's a strict tradition and they really are doing serious meditation it's got a really wise

uh like a roshi like the a teacher there and um yeah I mean in some respects like like you're saying here like like some of the really early Buddha sutas like in

the Attica Wagga a lot of them read like
Zen or majama philosophy
you just don't believe anything don't
you know don't rely on any kind of
thinking unless I mean it's for
practical purposes you know you're
trying to figure out your taxes or
something you have to think but
um it's not reality that if you want to
know reality you have to go beyond
thinking and cultivate a silent mind
that kind of a thing so Zen does have
its advantages and in some respects it
can be superior to teravada if
the Terra water places are lacks and
don't have a wise teacher in the Zen

place is not lacks and does have a wise
teacher

and the Buddhists of a vowel I mean

I don't know

it's uh

in a way is not what the Buddha would
have taught and I don't think he would
have endorsed it that in in some ways
bodhisattva ideas are

yeah it's hard to explain how it arose
other than

um I mean this this could be a long
digression that we really can't afford
because we're already over two hours but
I have read the whole bodhisattva
concept

um comes from like devotional early like

early Buddhist like terravada and
devotional Literature Like The Jonica
stories where the Buddha is perfecting
his part of me's lifetime after lifetime
after lifetime over millions and
millions and billions and trillions of
years

to become an omniscient Buddha and so
the just the natural human glorification
of the founder of the religion which in
of course in Christianity made Jesus God
almighty

it's uh you know it made the Buddha way
way above

like ordinary aurohans ordinary
enlightened beings and so to become a

Buddha was seen as Superior to becoming a fully enlightened Harahan even though the Buddha himself was an arahant and was obviously exhorting people to become arahants

if they possibly can manage it and the earliest texts have no mention at all of bodhisattvas and so forth in fact what he saw it by itself is probably a mistranslation of bodhisatta in Pali or proto-pali because SATA doesn't necessarily mean being it can mean it's a past participle of sajidi which means to be bound for you know to be you know like bound to sense was somebody who was bound for enlightenment Bound for becoming a

Buddha not an Enlightenment being which doesn't make a lot of sense in a bodhisattva who is postponing Enlightenment indefinitely until all beings in the universe are saved when these beings in the universe that supposedly required saving don't ultimately exist anyway because there's no self

but we don't need to wallow through that and uh I'm just going to move on to the next question here which is from nearmit and nirmitt says is consciousness produced by the brain if not then why does people's behaviors and personalities change after brain damage

yeah we've I've discussed this a number
of times

and

Consciousness is not produced by the
brain but it is complexified organized
and utilized by the brain just like

electricity isn't created by a computer
but it is like complexified organized
and utilized by the computer so the

Consciousness is not produced by
electrochemical reactions in the gray
blob of meat but the gray blob of meat

is able to again utilize you know
complexify organize it and utilize it so
that it can be used for practical
samsaric purposes

and so

that explains why you know if you get brain damage you know part of your mind becomes dysfunctional to say at least I mean you can just die certain parts of your brain are damaged especially some of the central stuff you know some of the reptile stuff

um you just die but um you know you get damage to the right temporal lobe and you become tone deaf for example left temporal lobe you lose the power of speech you know the back back here in the back I can't remember what it's called but I mean you know the optic lobe I guess

um you know you can go blind so

obviously the brain at least in this
version of reality in this I'm sorry
world

you know it it does sort of serve as a
vehicle for thinking Minds

but a thinking mind is not the same
thing as consciousness

that you don't have to like I was just
mentioning with regard to my important
Insight in Burma you don't have to think
in order to be conscious the
Consciousness is already there

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

Brembo and Rambo says does

methamphetamine open up doors to demonic
Realms or are these experiences pure

hallucination well I mean those two are not necessarily mutually exclusive because according to Mahayana especially and I think they're probably right in this sense I mean even taravata claims that this entire Cosmos is produced by ignorance or delusion and so when the entire Cosmos is created by delusion it's it's not a very far step take to say that this Cosmos is not ultimately real it's a kind of Illusion so ultimately it would be a kind of hallucination but I really don't have enough experience with methamphetamine to really say for sure from my own experience

um whether it really can't open up the
door to demonic Realms this I mean I
assume there are just going with
conventional samsaric reality I assume
there are demonic Realms I assume you
know anything that's possible is out
there somewhere

but whether methamphetamine specifically
opens up those doors I mean I've heard
that like DMT opens the doors to other
kinds of like astral beings and so forth
Maybe

but I don't I can't really say but
ultimately it's all a hallucination
including you know us sitting here right
now that ultimately even that is a kind
of hallucination it's not ultimately

real

but yeah I was regarding methamphetamine
or DMT for that matter I really can't
speak from experience because I've never
opened up any doors to demonic Realms
that I'm aware of

so I'll just move on to bramble's next
question do terravonna Buddhist texts
speak of Yama or the Lord of death early
Buddhist texts speak of the Lord of
death

um

yeah it's like uh now to kawaga of the
Sutton ipata mentions the Lord of death
um but

it's not probably not the same as Yama

who is sort of like Pluto or Hades in in Western classical mythology you know he's like the the judge of the Dead you know after you die you have to stand Before the Throne of Yama or or Pluto or Hades and then you know they decide what to do with you or something um just decide whether you have any special punishments coming or whether you just have to you know lurk around in the darkness as an ordinary shade or some such

uh Yama is one of the main protagonists in one of the the main upanishads but in Buddhism there is there are what are called Yama Gods there's a heaven this the the heaven of the Yama Gods but

they're not judges of the dead it's it's
I guess they repurposed
um the gods called niyama
um I'm really no Authority on like where
some of these obscure Heaven Realms
because they're it's mentioned almost
not at all in Buddhism sort of like
asuras where you know it was like a
pre-existing mythology and the Buddhists
had to fit into their cosmology
somewhere or other so they just put them
in the yamah god heaven and they really
don't have anything I know of to do with
with death other than I think according
to Orthodox tradition the Yama gods are
called yamagots because they kill

like unhappiness or something like that
you know they're living in a state of
bliss and so all of their their
unhappiness and dejection has been
killed by this living in this Heaven
realm or some something like that but
really the Lord of death in taravana has
turned into essentially Mara who's like
the Buddhist devil and Mara itself means
something like killer or death it has
the same Indo-European root as the the
English words murder and Mortal you know
mortality death
so you know like a mortal wound is a
wound that makes you die makes you be
dead
so

um there was the Lord of death which was probably like Indian

it was sort of like an Indian uh mythology

the Indian theology if we're being more polite I guess where you know you've got this God that comes and takes your soul and you know takes you away to the next world

and that somehow metamorphosed into Mara who's like the Lord of samsara you know he's

um not just the Lord of death he's the Lord of samsaric existence the whole cycle of birth and death and rebirth and red death

but with regard to Yama
as a god of like the underworld judging
the dead I don't recall seeing it it
might be in there in some obscure
reference in the sutos somewhere
so I think I'm just going to move on to
the next question and this is from
another person whose name I can't
pronounce
is spelled s-j-o-r-s
and I assume it's like
like Scandinavian or something where it
would be like see yours
it's yours
I don't know
and if you really want me to pronounce
your name correctly you might want to

try some phonetics or something
especially that the guy in Poland I mean
that name is just kind of nightmarish
at least with regard to Americans who
have to pronounce it
so anyways Sears says siors
I don't know he says yoga Chara says
that the Alaya regionana is the
Consciousness that appropriates the body
is it possible that the higher
Consciousness that takes over in
near-death experiences not sure if it's
the right term is the Alaya or else in
the Fez Edition you argued
Fez
in the first edition you argued that

Free Will doesn't exist and that a Hindu Sage said that the only Freedom one has is the freedom of being mindful everything else running on autopilot as it were is it possible that in such situations the Mind realizes that the body controls itself as opposed to ordinary everyday life when the Mind habitually thinks that it is the one controlling the body I've often wondered myself well with regard to the Alaya regionana or the storehouse consciousness postulated by at least one of the ancient Indian schools of Buddhism it was a way of kind of sneaking in a cells or a soul

through the back door and it
certainly didn't catch traction with uh
most Buddhist schools Theravada does not
accept it at all and I'm rather
skeptical of it myself the storehouse
Consciousness which is like where your
karma is stored
and um

yeah I I it's I it's hard for me to
swallow so is it possible that the
higher Consciousness it takes over and
near-death experiences is the Alia uh
yeah I don't think so I mean maybe I
mean in a kind of conventional sense it
wouldn't be ultimately real but none of
this is ultimately real the near-death

experience itself is not ultimately real
so

yeah that one is kind of up in the air

I'd rather doubt it I mean it might be
something kind of along those lines

though you know it's it's sort of like
you know in Buddhism

terrible Buddhism especially you say
there's no self in Ultimate Reality but
conventionally you can say there's a
self also there's no soul in Ultimate
Reality and for some reason theravada
Buddhists will say okay but but there's
even not a soul a conventional one
you know they just put their foot down
they say you can say it conventionally
there's a self but even conventionally

there's no soul
and I don't think that that's
necessarily correct as I've
um spoken so heretically recently about
like when you're in a a near-death
experience not the kind of ndes that
were mentioned above but when you're
almost like like one example you're in a
car you're going too fast you hit a
patch of ice the car starts sliding out
of control and in in my case when that
would happen to me as a young man my
mind would just go Crystal Clear I'd
stop thinking and my body would just
automatically do what was necessary to
keep me alive and only after the danger

had passed would I re-enter so to speak
a normal thinking state of mind again
I'd start thinking again but there was
just this Crystal Clarity where it was
like some higher power is just
controlling your body doing what is
necessary to keep you alive and then
once the danger is gone then it sort of
steps back and lets you know the the
meat puppet take over again

um

let's see is it possible in such
situations the Mind realize that the
body controls itself well

I don't think that it's it's the lizard
brain that's doing it my sweetheart also
hypothesized that this sort of higher

Consciousness where your this state of
Crystal Clarity when you're in an
emergency situation is like the lizard
brain taken over but the example I had
when I was like sliding on my back down
this very Steep Hill in the middle of
the night in a Burmese Forest it was
like I I knew to let go of the bamboo
pole I was holding but I kept a firm
grip on that candle
and the lizard brain isn't going to be
able to think that fast it's not going
to be that aware of the fact that if I
drop that candle I'd be stuck on that
Cliff side for until morning
holding on to something to keep from

sliding down even further

so it's like some higher Consciousness

it seems to me

and I think that higher Consciousness is

always there and conventionally it could

be called the soul I suppose maybe

the yogatara Buddhists would declare

that to be the Alay avinyana although I

don't know enough about the Alaya

to uh to really say

but um

yeah I don't think it's really the body

doing it because it it involves a higher

level of Consciousness than your

thinking mind than like your ego it's

like something more advanced than that

because your ego just isn't enough

that's why this higher level or this
other level takes over

so it could just be like a
multi-dimensional

multi-dimensional Consciousness that the

we're not aware of our thinking mind is

not aware of just because you can't

really comprehend what's higher than

yourself that there are aspects to the

mind that go beyond the thinking ego and

the intellect and so forth that it's

there it's just that own mind or

Consciousness is not limited

to the intellect and and our feelings

and so forth our ego what we consider to

be our mind that that's just the the ego

is only aware of just this limited
amount of stuff and there's more to our
mind that is beyond that including like
our karma from supposedly presumably
past lives and so forth you know it's
it's there it's just that we're not
aware of it
and there's a lot that's another Insight
that I got

um

in in Burma is that really there's
there's way more to the Mind than than
you can be aware of by thinking or by
looking around and trying to identify
stuff it's just totally beyond that
and as it turns out amazingly again I'm
caught by surprise that was the last

question of all questions that was the last one so I didn't do too bad it's less than two and a half hours anyway and uh if it's too long for you to watch in one sitting feel free to watch it in installments or something I probably won't divide this up into two parts because it's it's less than two and a half hours

so I mean why watch a movie when you can just sit there and watch me doing this and I do apologize for not wearing The Fez at all this time but it's it's just the way it is The Fez is going to be for very special occasions from now on and so uh that's it and if you have any

more questions and please I mean from now on just just because of the the length of the the list of questions uh try to keep the number of questions down to let's say six or less I just I just gave you an extra added free question and if you ask more than that then I may answer them all if there's not lots and lots of questions but if there are lots and lots of questions and you've asked like like a whole long list of questions I may just pick which ones I want to answer from now on but I mean up until now I've been answering conscientiously every single question that people ask unless it's obviously just like a rhetorical question or

something or or I just don't see it you
know they asked it in a weird place that
I'm not

you know I I didn't remember to look
like some video that's not a q a you
know they might ask a question there and
then I'm looking in the usual places
where people ask questions and I just
don't see it I didn't didn't look there
or something

but if you have questions to ask about
terravonna Buddhism especially or early
archaic Buddhism or about being a monk
or living in Burma as a monk especially
that kind of stuff anything that you
think I might know something about

um you know I'm relatively well read I know some stuff about other schools of Buddhism and Hinduism a little bit about Western philosophy and sort of parapsychology you know psychic phenomena and that sort of thing

um all that spare game

so feel free to ask whatever questions you think in the comments below if you have access to the Discord server you can ask them there if you have access to my subscribe Star channel you can ask them there

and uh

feel free to look at the URL links below and subscribe and like if you haven't already and be happy

hello and welcome to episode 52 of
question and answer I am your host as
usual

and I think it's been like three weeks
since I've done one of these and it was
kind of predictable why I went for three
weeks sort of kind of was after two
weeks I only had about 18 questions and
that was probably because in the video
the Q a video I did before this I was
not exactly getting overwhelmed I was
getting so many questions it was taking
well over two answers to answer all of
them two answers two hours to answer all
of them

and so I requested that people limit the

number of questions per q a to six it was five plus an extra bonus question you can ask so at six it's six for the price of five

and

um it was kind of predictable that people would think oh he's complaining about people asking questions and so um I just got way fewer questions than usual after that

so maybe I shouldn't have said anything but then last weekend I was just gonna do a nice easy 18 question q a and I was just so busy doing other things that uh it just didn't happen so now we're back up to about at least 30 questions and I could make these short by answering

concisely without Meandering and

digressing everywhere but

nope not gonna do that

so I suppose without any further ado

I'll just go to the first question here

and this is from covax ncpad zidana

and seal of action says

I heard that venerable sorry puta was

Fanning the Buddha at the time

and this is he's referring to the

discourse the diganaka the deaconanka

suto

so I'll just do a little commentary and

then start the question over again so I

did a video uh discussing the deegananda

suta and according to this suta

it was this discourse that the Buddha
delivered to
um an aesthetic named
that caused sorry puta who is Fanning
the Buddha at the time to become
enlightened when he heard this discourse
there was just something clicked sorry
puta became enlightened this is bad
Quinn sorry puta had been a disciple of
the Buddha for I think just like maybe
two weeks
so I'll begin at the beginning of the
question again I heard that venerable
sorry puto was Fanning the Buddha at the
time what kind of fans did they have an
ancient magada back then on top of that
where would the Buddha sit when giving

these kinds of talks to people did he sit cross-legged on the ground or on some kind of elevation as his customary today of many Indian spiritual teachers what are some other cultural means of respect that were given to the Buddha like these that you can think of so I guess it's like three questions but we'll just start with the uh the first one which is uh reasonable

so what kind of fans did they have in ancient magada I'm pretty sure that fans in those days were mainly made out of Palmyra leaves as a lot of them are still made today in Burma you got

um it's not like the long frond like a coconut palm it's like the fan of a palmyra that's you know it's you know big and it's kind of spiky and then you just cut off the spikes and you put like a

um

when it like a border like a reinforcing border on it and you can use just the stalk of the leaf as the handle or you can add like some fancier kind of handle and I assume that's mainly what people like monks were using in India for well over 2 000 years so I assume it's probably that kind of fan and it's it's cheap you know Palmyra leaves fall and you just pick one up and trim it a

little bit and you can use it as a fan
so let's see on top of that where would
the Buddha sit on giving these kinds of
talks to people do you sit Crossing it
on the ground or on some kind of
elevation as is customary today of many
Indian spiritual teachers well
considering that he was wandering around
a lot I assume
that a lot of the time at least he was
just sitting on a mat on the floor or on
the ground you know under a tree
somewhere it may be that he was sitting
on like a slight Eminence maybe the
highest ground in the area because
um there was a certain etiquette and

we'll get to that in the next part of
this question a certain etiquette with
regard to
paying respect to a teacher and also
paying respect to the dhamma
or to Dharma in general and so there's
actually a rule of monastic discipline
forbidding a monk from teaching dhamma
if he's sitting on a lower seat than the
people then at least one of the people
that he's teaching
so it's just a sign of respect that the
teacher sits on if not a higher seat at
least an even C he doesn't sit on a
lower seat
um it may be if he was in a monastery
that he would sit

maybe on a bench or something

I can't remember what the the Indian

word is for those wooden platforms

the teachers sit on but um

a lot of the time he's just sitting on

the ground

and let's see here

uh what are some other cultural means of

respect that were given to the Buddha

like these you can think of well it

wasn't just means of respect given to

the Buddha it was means of respect in

Ancient India given to any spiritual

teacher and for example you don't Point

your feet at a venerable person there's

a rule of monastic discipline against

drinking alcohol in fact where there was a relatively highly advanced monk I don't remember if he was an aura hunt or not but he was a highly Advanced monk who for some reason drank alcohol before it was against the rules I he didn't drink it to get drunk maybe it may have been medicinal or something and uh he just fell asleep with his feet pointing straight towards the Buddha and that was a sign of you know look how drunk and careless he is he's pointing his feet at the bottom

so you don't Point your feet I mean you don't sit with your feet out in front of you you know when you're listening to a Dharma talk there's also a rule of

dhamma a rule of Winnie I mean uh that
you don't teach dhamma to someone who's
sitting with his knees up hugging his
knees and you don't you don't teach
dominance someone who's carrying a
weapon you don't teach Domino someone
whose head is covered they should
uncover their head you're not allowed to
teach Domo to someone who's wearing
shoes

that it's a sign of respect that you
take your shoes off in the presence of a
spiritual teacher there's also a rule of
discipline that if a monk is approaching
a senior monk he has if the senior monk
is Barefoot then the the approaching

Junior has to take his shoes off before
he he comes close to the the Elder Monk
um you know there's just various ways
you know you make uh Anjali it's called
let's see Ultra cultural means of
respect that were given to the Buddha
like these that you can think of
yeah I think that's that's a lot of the
main ones

you know you bow or at least put your
hands together don't wear shoes don't
Point your feet don't sit in
disrespectful ways uh you know don't
have like a weapon or anything on on
your person don't wear don't have your
head covered

um I knew this one monk long ago he was

extremely strict and also he was just
extremely aesthetic he was like a
Buddhist Rambo and one time when he
happened to be in America somebody asked
him if he would be willing to give a
talk to their group their meditation
group

so he sits in front of the group
and doesn't say anything for about five
minutes and it just gets up and walks
out so then the teacher of the the main
teacher of the group you know the leader
of the group runs after him and I said
why didn't you teach anything why do you
just sit there in silence and get up and
leave and he said there was a person in

the group who was wearing a hat because it was like winter time and it was cold somebody had like a stocking cap on and he says it's it's against linear for me to teach anybody who's got their head covered and so uh the leader of the group went back and asked the person to take their stalking cap off or their beanie or whatever it's called nowadays and then he went back and taught Domo so there's a lot of etiquette things like that um if you're really interested one of the uh the best sources of information on that would be the Sakia rules which are towards the end of the potty mocha rules so I'll just move on a nice question

from CEO of action

and first I'm going to drink some bovine

glandular secretions with the umbrella

to show that I have class

okay

so see of actions says

how do you reconcile the idea of

Consciousness being like electrons that

are always there and only manifesting

itself in certain ways due to the brain

changing it but the Buddha is saying

that Consciousness does not arise

Without a Cause

um

first of all I wouldn't I mean the

comparison with electricity the

Consciousness I mean what he's talking about here is I've compared the brain to a computer and that the computer doesn't create electricity it just takes the electricity and complexifies it and organizes it and utilizes it and I was saying the same thing about the brain it doesn't create Consciousness it just complexifies Consciousness that's already there and organizes it and utilizes it

so he's saying how how can I compare Consciousness with electrons when the Buddha says Consciousness does not arise Without a Cause so I wouldn't really compare Consciousness with electrons so much as I compare Consciousness was like

the the quantum field you know how empty
space contains Infinite Energy
um but it's not really measurable except
in certain obscure ways you know
physicists you know there's like the
Casimir effect or or you know things
like this where you can deduce the empty
space contains infinite energy or zero
energy just depending on how you do the
math the math comes out right either way
but um the Buddha says that uh
Consciousness does not arise without a
cause that's it's sort of it's weenyana
conda I mean Consciousness that is
discernible that you can perceive as
Consciousness would arise with a cause

the infinite formless Consciousness is
the same as nothing essentially now
everything and nothing you know infinite
energy and zero energy in the quantum
field it's sort of that paradoxical sort
of situation

um but with regard to winyanakanda the
um aggregate of Consciousness that is
one of the constituents of a human being
then you can say sure

conscious that kind of Consciousness
does not arise without some mental state

I mean you have to be conscious of
something you can't just have plain
Consciousness there always has to be
consciousness of something

um but if you get into Infinite formless

Consciousness then it just it's all bets
are off you just have this paradoxical
state where you know anything that's
infinite and formless I mean it has no
beginning no end No Boundaries you can't
perceive it

in order to perceive it you've got to
have some kind of limits to it some kind
of boundary some kind of discernible
characteristics and

the theory goes the argument goes that
infinite formless Consciousness sort of
like the upanishads are talking about as
Brahman and Atman no
see

that

it's it's just it's like an absolute
it's not some sorry it's just off the
scale once something starts being
infinite and formless when it stops
having a beginning and an end and
boundaries and so forth It's just off
the scale it's not really in samsara
anymore

so it's a paradoxical situation
and that's just the way it has to be if
you're if you're discussing the absolute
it's going to be paradoxical unless you
just have really rudimentary ideas about
the absolute and any kind of idea about
the absolute is going to be like invalid
if not just plain and playing false it's
going to be at best invalid because any

kind of concept or explanation is
inevitably going to be some saric and
you can't discuss something that isn't
some sort using some saric terminology
you just drag it into samsara and this
sort of mundaneify it into something
that isn't the absolute anymore
foreign so

I think I'll just move on to CEO box and
see about zina's next question

ah it's weird it's like I always want to
drink something when I do these videos I
know it's

I just feel more comfortable doing it
but then it makes me have like these
little Burpee things that my my

sweetheart is always

kind of getting on my case about that

why you keep doing that on the videos

so I was

just because

so anyways you know and says in the

pariah navaga Buddha says to see all

things as empty and in a guardian as

breakdown he says the idea of emptiness

is inherently linked to dependent

origination as nothing has its own

independent existence however nibana is

also called empty but if it is outside

of dependent

then why is it considered empty it seems

like it would be the one thing that

isn't empty because it isn't dependent

on anything can you please explain why
emptiness would apply even to nibana
well nibbana is indeterminate I mean
it's like reality is empty

so

like

phenomenal things ultimately in reality
are empty

nibana also in reality is empty because
reality is I mean you could call it
empty which is kind of again you're
having to use some sortic terminology
you can call it a biakada indeterminate
I mean you just can't Pin It Down
and that's just the way reality is
anything at the ultimate level you know

at the level of paramata Sacha or
ultimate truth is going to be
fundamentally empty
unless you're an I'll be down the
scholar then maybe you might have a
different idea

so I'll just uh move on to the next
question here this is from crazy
librarian

and crazy librarian is making asking a
question with reference to a statement I
made on the Discord server see there was
um

in the in the past the recent past on my
Discord server there have been some pure
land of Buddhists who are trying to
portray pure land Buddhism as authentic

teachings of the Buddha and I just
cannot buy it at all
you know in some ways pure land is
teaching the exact opposite of what the
historical Buddha was teaching according
to the earliest texts
and so
um I made this statement and this is a
quote from what I wrote on the Discord
server two things I see about early
Buddhism and about what the founder of
our spiritual system taught one no
mythological Buddhas including Mattea
kasipah and dipankara let alone amitaba
and two strive to get in line in this
very life

so then crazy librarian asks was
referenced to that statement that I made
what does this mean isn't Matea Di
pankara and Caspa in the Pali Canon well
yeah Mateo de pankra and kaspa are
mentioned in the polycanon but they're
not mentioned in the earliest text just
because something is in the poly Canon
does not mean that the Buddha himself
actually taught it that it goes all the
way back to the earliest teachings
I mean there are some some poly texts
some texts that are canonical in the
polycanon in the tapitica that weren't
composed until literally hundreds of
years after the time of the Buddha
and so Matea de pankara and kasapa

eventually in my opinion I mean this
isn't Orthodox pretty obviously but in
my opinion it was you know the cult of
the Buddhas where the Buddha became
mythologized you know he wasn't just an
enlightened founder of of the of dama of
the system of Buddhism
that he was just one of a long line of
Buddhas that
um when Buddhism or when when dhamma
disappears from this world then a new
Buddha has to ReDiscover it and he has
to be much more advanced than any of his
disciples you know he's not just an aura
hunt he spends countless eons
perfecting the his parmies and parmies

literally means like Perfection and
there's 10 of them in terrible Buddhism
and uh you know he's got to purify his
character

just over countless eons in order to
become a Buddha in order to set the
wheel of dhamma rolling again after it
finally dies out due to impermanence and
if everything has a beginning has an end
and So eventually

the terravonna Buddhists just came up
with this essentially like a Pantheon or
this lineage going back countless World
Cycles you know they've got they've got
them all named out I mean going back
just countless eons just countless
worlds before this world

now countless indias before you know the
the present India
and uh dipankara
was the the Buddha that was the Buddha
of a world this you know a zillion
gajillion years ago and he was the one
that
um gave the biade in Burmese it's called
viade you can't become a Buddha unless
another Buddha
said like prophesies that you will
become a Buddha in the future
you know that kind of sets you firmly on
the path of becoming a Buddha
so
our historical Buddha go to My Buddha

was

um he was a non-boot his hermit

or ascetic

and sumado that was his name sumado like

ajan sumedo

and there's this story about how

um deepankarabuda was going to come to a

ceremony where he and you know his

millions of of followers I mean I don't

know I don't remember how many but

especially in the past Legends of past

Buddhas the numbers just become

astronomical like with regard to their

height with regard to their lifespan

with regard to the number of followers

the number of enlightened followers with

the number of uh like this like the

intensity of their austerities and so forth they just become just off the scale in just mythological exaggeration and any of you who really want to to learn about this

just look up mangala Buddha look up the details of mangala Buddha who was a few Buddhas after the pankara I think you know in some previous world

where there was an India where people were speaking Pali and so forth

so anyway sumado

he volunteered to prepare a certain amount of footpath for deepankra Buddha and his retinue of enlightened monks to walk to get to the Pavilion where they

were you know all of them are going to be fed it was just you know a city-sized pavilion presumably and he didn't have time to finish there was this one muddy spot so he just throws himself on his face

on the muddy spot so that the Buddha and his retinue can walk over the top of him and then deepanka Buddha prophesies I guess you I mean it's kind of a judeo-christian word but he predicts or foresees that this this sumado this this hermit sumado

is going to become you know in countless eons in the future a Buddha named godama so it's it's largely mythological Mateo is going to be the next I mean in in

Sanskrit it's my trail

uh kasapa was the Buddha preceding
directly preceding our historical Buddha
godama

so I mean I really don't think that the
Buddha was teaching about other Buddhas

in fact the whole idea of the Buddha
being like way above you know like a
whole different order of enlightened
being above his enlightened disciples

I really do think that's a later

development of just glorification of the
founder and then from glorification of
the founder it just branched off into
all this mythological stuff eventually
culminating in like the pure land idea

of these other Cosmic Buddhas like
Amitabha and medicine Buddha and so
forth

so just because something is in the poly
Canon does not mean that it's
necessarily true and there's lots and
lots of fairy tales talking animals fire
breathing dragons and mythological
Buddhas that you can find there but
don't believe everything you read
so I'll just move on to Crazy Librarians
next question

and he says

I assume crazy librarian is a guy
regarding your answer I assume his
gender

regarding your answer where a monk has

to choose between caring for a sicked
loved one and his duty as a monk did the
Buddha ever talk about this in the suta
and give advice what to do well in the
sutras they're pretty hard now's it's
like to practice dhamma is the most
important thing you can do it it really
takes precedence even over supporting
your family and the one story that
really stands out in my mind and some of
these stories in their glorification of
the Monk's life at the expense of like
worldly duties like filial duties and so
forth I mean it can sound really awful
to a modern Western and this this story
sounds pretty awful but anyway

there was this monk who was ordained and
he had been married and had a child like
a baby sort of like the Buddha had a
baby when when he went forth and became
an aesthetic according to the legend so
there's this monk who was

I mean he left his wife and his infant
baby

I guess all babies are infants aren't
they

so he left his baby

and he's he's a monk now and he's

meditating in Bliss

presumably at this park

and so the wife catches wind that her
ex-husband

the uh the Monk Is is in this park so

she brings the baby and she just comes up to him and gives some little speech like here's your here's your child you take care of him and she just sets the baby down in front of the Monk and walks off but being curious and all she's like hides behind a tree and watches to see what this Monk's gonna do and the monk doesn't do anything he just keeps meditating he just ignores the baby and he just keeps ignoring and ignoring the baby he's like in deep meditation or some such and finally the the ex-wife and the mother realizes that he's not going to do a damn thing with that baby so she just comes back and picks him up

and walks off with him and manages to
take care of him somehow
and in a way

you know the Buddha's Own Story

according to the legend you know he does
something similar I mean he didn't
really leave his wife and infant son in
any state of hardship because according
to the legend they were living in a
palace

so I mean they weren't going to starve
or anything

but um I mean if you can reconcile
practicing intensive dhamma and you know
taking care of like an aged parent with
Dementia or something

um then I mean that's fine and some

monks can manage that but according to just the hard-nosed ancient Indian approach and that Dharma is the most important thing that you can dedicate your life to then yeah it takes precedence

so I'll just move on to the next question and this is from the person who used to have an easily pronounceable name but now it's like he explained it to me at least once how to explain the name

um but it's true

something like that

says I am willing to take one for the team what was your scariest experience

in Burma

well

I should have I should have read up on

this I should have reviewed

um I did write about this shortly after

it happened

within just a few years of it happening

but it's been well over 10 years now

but I mean there's there's kind of it's

kind of a long story actually

um

I was living at this Monastery one bow

Wildlife Refuge monastery

and with one other Monk and he was he

was in his late 70s early 80s I'm not

sure exactly how old he was

but um

he was bitten by a cobra and died
so like I think it was the next day we
cremated him because it was the hot
season we don't have electricity meat
goes bad in hot weather we had to
cremate him fast

so we cremated the day that he was
cremated I was going to go to the
Outhouse to attend the call of nature I
opened the door and there's this big
Russell's Viper

I mean deadly poisonous snake the most
dangerous snake in Burma is coiled up
right around the water pot right in my
Outhouse and so naturally I just uh
changed my mind about taking a dump just

then and just kind of slowly backed off
and closed the door and left it there
but none of this was the scary part I
mean you get used to seeing snakes

um

old unandia being bitten by a cobra and
dying I mean it wasn't really scary I
mean it was definitely sobering you know
I mean there's definitely something to
take very seriously but it wasn't really
scary

but what was scary was

uh just a I think it was like one or two
days after The Cremation and this is
like April this is like the middle of
the hot season just blazing hot
and I'm inside my cave doing walking

meditation just walking back and forth
and I happen to notice that outside
through the through the air hole like
the window everything starts turning
brown

and so it's just kind of weird I hadn't
seen that before so I look out there and
it's like I'm looking through Brown
tinted sunglasses everything is brown
and the wind just starts blowing really
hard and then all of a sudden I mean
it's like 110 115 degrees Fahrenheit
outside these big hailstones like the
size of strawberries just start whipping
down and they're they're kind of like at
an angle like this the wind is blowing

so hard and within like 15 20 seconds
the ground is covered with ice
and I'm thinking what the hell is going
on

um I remember reading a long time ago
science fiction story called Lucifer's
Hammer by Larry nivenin and Jerry
pornell about what happens when a comet
smacks into the ocean and this sort of
thing does happen every few tens of
millions of years very least

and so there's this guy a scientist he's
walking down the street in California
somewhere and all it's a it's a bright
sunny day all of a sudden the sky just
blackens and it just starts pouring down
rain just in torrential downpour and

some of it gets into his mouth and he
feels he tasted it's salty
and it's like when he tastes the salt
water is pouring down he knows something
seriously is going wrong and that's kind
of the way I felt it was like you know
the middle of the middle of a tropical
hot season it's just semi-desert
and everything just turns brown you've
got intense winds and just all within 20
seconds the ground is covered with ice
just these big balls of ice the size of
strawberries I'm thinking man what what
did nukes hit or something yeah really I
thought I thought it was like world war
three had just started because I

couldn't I mean it's like I wasn't sure
you know I didn't just jump to
conclusions but it's like what the hell
is going on
and so it was like this feeling of like
alarm and Dread
it's much worse than like you know
almost stepping on a Viper or something
it was just this really visceral kind of
of just is the world coming to an end
kind of a Feeling
so that's kind of a long answer to a
short question so I'll just move on to
true that was his next question here
you sitting next to the waterfall and
Athena's sigil comment about
imagining you living there and

contemplating like the Buddha gave me
the idea for the next question okay this
is due to some some video I made
um next to a waterfall not too long ago
and Athena sigil
left a comment on the YouTube video
saying that you imagine me just living
there next to the waterfall
contemplating the amenity the universe
or whatever
so it's always because this is says do
you think that people have different
mind State when dwelling in nature as
opposed to city and urban areas
they may be calmer or more peaceful or
something yeah definitely that's why

monks are encouraged to go out into the forest or at least in the Buddhist time monks were encouraged to go out alone into a forest and just meditate at the root of a tree

and I've mentioned this before but one of my favorite sutas in the Maji mini Kaya is the Lesser discourse on voidness or emptiness

and step one if you want to cultivate emptiness

is you go out into a forest because there's less

commotion going on you know less crying babies and barking dogs and there's people yelling and talking and creaky cartwheels going down the tracks and

just artificial rules that you have to follow artificial like right angles and straight lines that just don't exist in nature kind of a thing

um so it's like your first step towards emptiness and just like peace you know Freedom Liberation is you get out of town

so yeah

um

yeah you're naturally eating naturally tend to be calmer or more peaceful if you're in a horse unless you're just scared of bears or something

so I'll just move on to uh

this is his next question here

how is it to work after 30 years of
leisure was it hard to get used to it
again after all these years
um that's kind of an interesting
question but the thing is I mean when if
you're living the life of a monk
seriously you know you're living
conscientiously as a monk you know
you're not doing it entirely wrong I
won't say that I was doing it entirely
right but you know there was a lot of
right in there and It prepares you for
anything It prepares you for death It
prepares you for life-threatening
situations It prepares you for just
about anything I mean you're more
equipped to deal with whatever comes up

if you practice dama intensely

intensively

so

you know it wasn't really hard to start

working again except physically just

being on my feet you know eight hours a

day and just lifting you know heavy

bundles of like sheet metal

stuff

um yeah I mean that was the hard part I

was just wiped out my first month

um after you know being a member of the

Leisure Class I did do some exercise I

did kind of a lot of walking when I was

in Burma and there's there's you know

chop would carry water kind of stuff but

it wasn't like hard work for eight hours
a day

so mainly it was physical but the the
mental aspect of it was actually pretty
easy I I adjusted fairly easily

so we'll just move on to the next

question I think this is from

Justin K or just Inc

only Inc

where's Justin King

yeah take your pick

so Justin K or Justin says

would you ever do a top 10 book

recommendation video on your favorite

books pertaining to Buddhism or just in

general I'd love to hear books relating

on the forest tradition

um I've actually done uh book
recommendations and my old blog used to
have I'm pretty sure the top 10 most
important books that I've ever read

um

but the old blog isn't up anymore it is
it has been abolished at least I've done
everything I know how to to to abolish

it

so

um

yeah Justin or Justin says I'd love to
hear books relating to the forest
tradition but

I'm not sure that very many of my top 10
most important books

with regard to understanding dhamma or
understanding reality or even
understanding the world would have much
to do with the forest tradition unless
you're just talking about very Ancient
Forest tradition like the sudanipata
would probably be in my top ten and I
mean that's like the original Forest
tradition that's what all monks were
Forest monks

so I mean that was very inspiring to me
it was reading the sutiny Pato that
pretty much inspired me to become a
terravana Buddhist

because I mean it's people nowadays they
think about Buddhism as you know it's
like soft and feminine and wimpy

and I think I've been told I don't know
if this is true but most terravonna
Buddhist teachers in the west you know
like we possuma teachers
so-called are are women with a high
percentage of like lesbians but I mean
that's not the way it used to be
terrible Buddhism in the in like as it
originally existed was one of the most
masculine spiritual systems ever devised
because it was devised by ascetic men
who were just tough as it would and who
avoided women like the plague
so yeah that would be about the only
books in my top 10 relating to the
forest tradition would just be like the

sutiny Pata

um just really ancient stuff

um I mean I'll I won't try to come up with the top ten off the top of my top of my head but um I mean like the first really important book like the first real Paradigm changer that I ever read was Desmond Morris is the Naked Ape which I read when I was like 14 years old

um Zen flesh Zen bones which I read when I was like 18 would probably be on the list is what I consider to be a really important book is a book that like significantly changes the way you look at things

and uh another one is uh battle for the

Mind by William Sargent which was uh a book written back in the 1950s early 50s uh talking about I mean it's really fascinating how he's talking about how we're all governed by habit not only humans but dogs you know higher vertebrates we just have these habits that we follow and they don't necessarily make us happy but so long as they seem to be getting us through the world alive we just cling to them and don't want to change unless we hit some kind of crisis in which the habits aren't working anymore and then we have like a breakdown and then we become very very open to suggestion and change and

that's how

um like Chinese

brainwashing worked that's how a lot of

interrogation methods like especially

installing a Soviet Union worked it's

how like military basic training works

it's how like Stone Age like manhood

rituals used to work where you know you

have this kid you send them out into

into the forest or make him undergo this

harrowing eye ordeal so that I mean he

just in this state of Crisis and then

you turn him into a Fearless Warrior who

will not question commands from the

chief or whatever

um and a lot of spiritual stuff like uh

some some meditation

um Retreats or

um some of the early Christian kind of

not really early like um methodism

started in this way with

um John Wesley would give these uh

sermons

and he generally avoided sophisticated

City Slickers he went out into the

rustic areas where people were more

simple and they had less capacity for

skeptical doubt about the Bible this is

like back in their like the 1700s

and his sermons

were mainly divided into two parts the

first half of the sermon is he's telling

them if you don't repent your sins

you're going to go to hell and any
Christian any believing Christian would
have to believe that
and then the second half of the sermon
he is just going into gory detail on the
torments of hell with the the demons and
the pitchforks and the boiling tar and
all that kind of stuff and people would
just freak out because they couldn't
deny it you know it's like he's just
pounding away at this idea if you don't
change if you aren't born again
you're going to burn in hell forever and
ever and they couldn't really deny it
because they were Christians and people
would just be foam out of the mouth
going in convulsions just totally

freaking out becoming unconscious and
then when they finally regain
Consciousness they were born again and
then they'd have like uh teachers or
trainers who would be like kind of
giving them the suggestions they needed
to hear to restructure them into good
Christians

so I mean that was that was an
interesting book for me but I don't
think Justin K was really

um

yeah

I think he's he says he'd love to hear
books relating to the forest tradition
yeah the only book relating to the

forest tradition that would be in my top 10 would be probably the sutiny Pata although with regard to understanding Buddhism I've got back here is uh studies in the origins of Buddhism by GC Pandey I've mentioned that many times in my videos I mean that has some mention of forest dwelling monks because it's going back to the origins of Buddhism he's trying to explain and what the earliest Buddhism was like and of course the earliest Buddhism was Forest monks so yeah I mean maybe I can maybe I can do it again but I've I have uh discussed you know the most important books in my life uh a number of times so

um I think I'll just move on to the next question

let's see yeah Justin says

also what are the differences between the Burmese Thai and Sri Lankan Forest traditions

well the only Forest tradition that

I know

a significant amount of information about would be

Burmese I might know more about the Thai Forest tradition than the Burmese Forest tradition because the ties have more of a forest tradition than the Burmese do I've never been to Sri Lanka I've met

relatively few Sri Lankan monks I've
read a little bit about Sri Lanka I know
that they have like a new Forest
tradition this like a reform movement
trying to go back to the like the the
early Spirit of Buddhism and that's
that's good I mean I've heard nothing
but good about this new Sri Lankan
Forest tradition
but um I really don't know that much
about it other than that it appears to
be very serious with you know amongst
sincerely trying to live up to the the
early ideals of forest dwelling because
um in Thailand there's much more of a
tradition of
Forest monks

um largely because of ajanman

um hanjan Shaw I suppose was a forest

Monk there are a number of uh Thai

Forest monks and there's a tie Forest

tradition a lot of uh pra tudong which

are monks that practice do tongas or

like the optional aesthetic practices

where they just wander around and they

they sleep under trees they might cheat

just a little bit and have what's called

a crop or a clot which is a big umbrella

with a mosquito net that you can hang

from a branch so that you know I'm

getting bitten by mosquitoes

but still

um it's it's relatively strict they it's

not as strong on meditation the ties
seem not to be as strong in meditation
as the Burmese but with regard to
um monastic discipline and
asceticism they they outdo the Burmese
but with regard to
um the Thai or the forest tradition in
Burma

um I was ordained in the tong Pulu
Forest tradition which was one of the
only

um well-known Forest traditions in Burma
and

it was mostly composed of
like simple Village People I mean you're
out in the forest so most of your
recruits into this tradition are going

to be you know from rural Villages
agricultural communities because you
know that's where they're the ones that
are closest to the monks they're more
likely to see the monks they're the ones
that are offering homes the monks in the
morning

and so I mean there wasn't a lot of
scholarship in the Burmese Forest
Tradition at least

um and in the Tom Pulu tradition you get
a few really intelligent ones who are
attracted to it who would enter it and
then they'd generally move off and
become famous you know living outside of
a forest or in some little patch little

Grove or something but

um I like

not the famous

tradition but

uh ujonika or the zodika of the Tom

putlu tradition

so I mean all in all the Burmese they

have a a really high opinion of abhidham

they know the the scriptures really well

they're really into scholarship the ties

maybe don't know the sutas as well on

average there are fewer Scholars scholar

monks in Thailand but there are more

strictly practicing

ascetic monks even though Burma probably

has a more a more solid meditation

tradition

and in Sri Lanka

in the forest tradition like I say I

mean they tend to be knowledgeable

intelligent monks they know the sutas

um they probably don't have much use for

abhidham all the ties also generally

don't talk about it much

and uh what their meditation and their

monastic disciplines like I really don't

know

so that's that's my

my little bit of knowledge on comparing

the the three Forest traditions and I

suppose you could also throw in like

Laos and Cambodia and so forth but uh

they've uh they really don't have a

strong uh monastic tradition there
partly because in Cambodia of course
most of the monks were killed off by the
Khmer Rouge

so we'll just move on to the next
question here also by Justin or Justin K
or just think

honorable Ponyo Bossa I've been watching
your Q A's for quite a while now thank
you for the time you've taken answering
our questions why thank you and you're
welcome I read a few years ago oh I read
a few years ago about a story of a
famous Forest monk I think from the Sri
Lankan tradition who was approached by a
rich woman who wanted to show off her
pity

the monk was known for his disdain
towards the laity and responded to the
woman by showing his ass is this disdain
for the laity common for certain monks
it would make sense given the
traditional Buddhism has a spiritual
hierarchy did you see laity as not gonna
make it not gonna make it as compared to
the monks who are striving to break
samsara

um

well my own teacher my main teacher as a
monk venerable Tom Pulu charlson Doyle
Seattle

he did I mean because he was Burmese he
was culturally conditioned he was a

product of his culture so he just naturally assumed that monks are superior to lay people and in Burma you don't even use the word for human being for monks

I mean Lou is the word for human being you don't use it for monks you're counting and Burma is a peculiar language because there are these counting words

that you have to use like if you're if you're naming a number of something like the word for counting people is Yao so you don't say

three people you say people three young and

monks just are encountered with monks

are counted with ba which is used for
counting anything exalted or Noble or
holy like uh ariatus is the Four Noble
Truths

so

um

so there's it's just built into the
culture that monks are considered to be
superior to lay people at least

um more venerable more more holy I

suppose

um I wasn't so much a product of that
culture so I didn't have that idea

nearly so much especially when you look
at the way most of the monks are most

Asian monks they really are not striving

for enlightenment and my my observation
was in a lot of places at least the lay
people were better Buddhists than the
monks were

um really neither of them had much
likelihood of becoming enlightened in
this life

but

at least the lay people were taking five
precepts seriously whereas the monks
have you know more than 2 000 precepts
and they just pretty much ignore most of
them except for the superficial ones
about you know having your head shaved
and and wearing the robes properly and
so forth they might take that seriously
but um I mean most of them handle money

and they just weren't serious

so

um

amongst showing his bare ass to a woman

that would actually be against linear

rules I'm pretty sure

I'm showing I mean showing your your

privates to a woman is certainly against

the rules

um showing your ass maybe if they she

couldn't see the privates

um but still I mean it's obviously an

act of contempt I mean maybe he was some

kind of eccentric holy fool Saint type

and you know he did not have any kind of

derogatory volitions or anything

so maybe

I mean my teacher who I started off talking about I didn't get to the main point it's like you know he would not accept anything from a lay woman or a lay person who was wearing shoes you know I mentioned earlier that you show Respect by taking your shoes off before you approach a holy man if if somebody forgot to kick off their sandals before offering him food he'd tell them to take their shoes off and women had to have What's called the Tibet um not the country but it's it's like this little um like a towel or a scarf that that lay women wear over one's shoulder and it

doesn't really have any purpose other than just traditional

but um it's a way of showing respect I suppose and he would not accept alms or anything from a woman that didn't have like the little scarf or towel over one shoulder you know they'd have to go get one if they wanted to put some food in his bowl or something

uh

also I'm I'm kind of reminded of

um I'm kind of surprised that nobody has ever asked in these q and A's who the little guy sitting next to the Buddha is up on top of the altar there and that's uh he was a famous Alchemist

kind of a a sage in like medieval Burma
back in the days of the Burmese Kings
and I'm pretty sure his name was Bobo
Ong

and one of the most famous stories about
Bobo Hong is a woman came to him and she
asked for his Blessing

um because she was starting a new

business or she already had this

business she wanted him to bless her so

that she would be successful in business

and he pulled out his dick and just

slapped her upside the head with it

and uh apparently it worked because she

prospered after that

um but I mean whether that was contempt

or not it's hard to say I mean it's

um you can't really know

with certainty what the karma is of an

act performed by somebody unless you

know what their volition was you know

why they were doing it what mental

States they had while they were doing it

so

let's see I hope I asked answered this

question and see

uh approached by a rich woman and wanted

to show off her pity the monk was known

for his disdain towards the lady uh

yeah I mean sometimes you can um like a

wise monk or a wise teacher can do stuff

to kind of humble proud arrogant rich

people like neem karoli Baba who's

teacher whose picture is also up there
on the altar he would do that with rich
people too I mean
um like rich people they'd give him all
this really fancy food you know they
they want to feed him this deluxe meal
and they'd be advising you here eat this
first and then after that cleanse your
palate with this and then try some of
this and then he just stir it all
together into a Glock before he would
eat it but if a poor person offered him
food you know he he'd act like it was
like this kingly Feast you know so
um he wasn't like doing it out of
you know any kind of desire to humiliate
in a bad way the rich people but

sometimes you know people they're just
all puffed up with pride and you know
the a wise person can use skillful means
to kind of deflate them a little bit
but I don't I don't know exactly what
the motives were for the the monk
showing his ass to the rich woman
so I think I'm just going to move on to
the next question here
and this is from Francois Alias Francois
and Francois says
a couple of years ago there was a debate
in the form of an exchange of small
Publications between ajan tanisaro and
biku Bodhi tanithro describes anata as a
skillful means that should be used to

get rid of egotistical views and not so much an ontological statement on the fundamental nature of a self while bikubody sees anata mainly as an ontological statement I tend to favor tanisro's interpretation

um actually I mean I'm kind of sorry to say it but I do tend to go with bikubody on that one that anjan tanisro I mean he does have an ego and he does kind of uh wallow in it a little bit or it seems to me in at least in the past maybe he's he's moved beyond that at this point

but no self really I mean I'm I'd be more inclined to go along with the mayanist like majama interpretation and

that there is no self because there is
no distinctions

there is no distinction there is no this
as opposed to that to even to
distinguish this from that is papancha
and Enlightenment nibbana one of the
synonyms for nibana is Nipa Pancha or no
papancha no discrimination no
distinguishing this from that you know
not even from Shinola
so

yeah I mean I would have to go with
bikubody even though his politics in my
opinion are Unworthy of a biku but still
I mean it's not just skillful means that
there really is a self you're just not

you're supposed to just deny it

um I mean what would be the point of

that that would be practically dishonest

you know if there is a self

but you're just not supposed to say

there is just for the sake of helping

you to

um defeat your own egoism

I'm sure would explain it differently

from that but that's kind of the way it

strikes me just reading this I mean

there just is no self because there is

no this or that

you know it's like it's it's all like

mental it's all the way perception works

it's like the way perception works is

first you have to single out something

and then you you slap a label on it
you know it's namarupa or papuncture
Sanka

where first you have to single out
something you know you have to give it
borders you have to differentiate figure
from ground

and then you give some sort of
significance or meaning to that even if
itself what the hell is that still it's
a that

and that is all artificial you can't
differentiate figure from ground even
you can't differentiate anything without
relations same as different from bigger
than smaller than these are relations

and without these relations you know how
like a multiplicity world you don't have
plurality

the only way you have plurality more
than even one thing maybe even one is
too high of a number

is you have to differentiate things and
you can't differentiate things without
relations you know at least different
from

and different from does not exist out
there in in some external world

I mean like a chemist can take a sample
of matter and you can analyze it you can
divide it up into its constituent
elements he's not going to isolate any
pure different from

it's just not there it's all in your
head

and that is largely how I interpret on
Tom

so unfortunately I guess I have to agree
with bikubody on that one

so I'll just move on to Francois next
question here

hi again Monsour Ponyo

people don't call me moms who are very
much it's just m m dot but that's I

assume that's French for Mister which is
Mansour

I have a question

I listen to a lot of your videos and it
seems to me that you adopt the majomoka

view of emptiness I.E a kind of
quasi-mistical substance or principle
some kind of universal Panacea or
Ultimate Reality my interpretation of
the early Buddhist or terravada notion
of no self is that there are actual
entities all in permanent of course all
of them an assembly of impermanent
Aggregates all of them existing only in
conditionality with other factors
existing only in a conventional sense
for me the point of anata is that for
all those reasons I can't own this
entity I call myself so there is a
conventional entity but even in this
conventional world this entity is not a
self I think the Buddha saw that the

main problem with the self is the ownership notion which is fundamental in any definition of a self so there is a self but it's not mine and it's kind of like Tanis Argentina because a self implies having control over it and enjoying it which is ultimately impossible thus the three characteristics duka and each with all due respect I don't really like the interpretation of emptiness as the fundamental nature of everything it seems to me like an unconscious reification the Buddha was talking about emptiness as a tool not as a principle that one should use only sporadically

like a purgative he said it is like a
boat to cross the river once the river
is crossed you don't carry the boat with
you did I understand correctly your
interpretation

cheers

um I don't think he underst let Francois
here

understands the majama position

that he's saying here my interpretation
of let's see a quasi mystical substance

The Emptiness is a kind of

quasi-mistical substance or principle

some kind of universal Panacea or

Ultimate Reality I mean he's not going

far enough I mean if you if he was to

say that to nagarjuna no no Guardian it

would just shoot it down it's like nope
that's not it because with regard to any
statement you can make the correct
answer is invalid now nope that's not it
to say that it's say that it exists is
invalid to say that it doesn't exist as
invalid to say that it does and doesn't
exist is invalid to say that it neither
doesn't nor doesn't exist is invalid any
kind of statement you make is going to
be samsaric and conditioned it's not
going to apply to what is not samsaric
and not conditioned
so I mean you can refer to a
quasi-mystical substance or principle
all you're doing is reifying what cannot

be reified or intellectualizing trying
to

trying to turn it into a concept that is
still validly applicable to what is out
there

or even within and it just doesn't work
that way like majama comp it shoots down
all arguments and then saves its own

Arguments for last and then shoots those
down because no argument you can make is
ultimately valid it doesn't apply to
reality

so

his interpretation of early Buddhists or
terrible denotion of no self there are
actual entities yeah I mean I've already
I already went over that and just in the

question above the previous question
that you cannot have entities without
adding this purely artificial
mental perception you take away
perception that entities don't exist
anymore

and then you can say well they exist out
there we're just identifying them all
you're doing is you're just trying to
kick perception out the front door and
sneak it into the back again because you
cannot have multiplicity without
perception and the perception is not it
that's not reality that's just symbols
purely artificial
so let's see here

and again he seems to be saying that
there is a self it's just not myself
but that's not what anata says there is
no self

which means all Damas are not self
and that's and it's not even Sankara
it's a

all conditioned things are Duca all
conditioned things are impermanent but
they don't say Sabe Sankara this is
because they're even in they're even
including unconditioned stuff

you know it's not just all conditioned
things or without self it's everything
including nibana it's just there is
there is no self
in Ultimate Reality

and to the extent that you want there to
be a self

anyway it's kind of craving to exist
clinging to existence or craving for
existence

or just being stuck in intellectuality
being stuck in perception

if you have a really good mystical
experience maybe

um you can get some feel for it to even
grok that um really there's nobody there
whether you identify with with it or not
so let's see here

yeah the main problem in the self is the
ownership notion

yeah

yeah I do think that nug Arjuna came
about as close to any

post Buddha

um Buddhist philosopher with regard to
understanding dependental rising and
emptiness and so forth that he says
dependent cool Rising is emptiness
that because

I mean there is no fundamental
underlying essence

to to any discrete entity and so these
discrete entities are reliant upon
context and this perceptual processes
and so forth and the context and the
perceptual processes are all just part
of the same mutually artificially
generating system

but it's really hard to talk about this
kind of thing

so let's see he doesn't like the
interpretation of emptiness as the
fundamental nature of everything well
forget emptiness just call it it's
indeterminate you cannot pin it down you
cannot understand it intellectually no
matter how hard you try it's sort of
like Kant wrote some critique of science
I don't remember the the title of the
book where he's saying that
that no amount of scientific progress is
going to bring scientists one inch one
micron closer to Ultimate to knowing
Ultimate Reality because you cannot know

the highest truth intellectually
it's just not going to happen
so let's see here was talking about
emptiness as a tool known as a principle
yeah I mean again that's just kind of
dishonest If there really is a self but
you're saying there isn't but the Buddha
is saying there isn't one I mean he's
he's speaking on truth
but maybe you can say well he's kind of
using it as a tub no semi I mean it's
not entirely dishonest you know he has
honest intentions of getting us
enlightened or something
and uh let's see he said it's like a
boat across the river I mean that's dama
that's the practice

you know that's all the stuff you're
doing this it's the practice is like the
the raft made of rubbish that you that
you cross the flood with and then once
you get to the other side you don't need
it anymore

you don't need anything anymore

so

I guess the end here is did I understand
correctly your interpretation of ananta
um not exactly I don't I don't think
so let's move on to this question this
is from nermit nirmict
and nirmict says

people around me are pressuring me to
spend most of my time in worldly

Pursuits but I want to spend more time practicing the dhamma any idea on how I should deal with this yeah I just do what you think is right and if everyone around you thinks you're wrong and a fool or whatever then that's just too bad

I mean that's one reason why Western monks tend to be more serious about their Dharma practice than monks Asian monks from them from a Buddhist culture is because a western monk he's got a I mean he might have to go against his family lose all of his friends just go against his culture in order to follow dhamma and so he's more serious about it you know he's he's not doing it just to

follow along with the herd

you know he's not following along with
his cultural conditioning you know he's
dead set on on cultivating wisdom and
Purity and so forth trying to liberate
trying to become liberated

whereas a lot of Asian monks you know
they're really just there because
you know they're too ugly and lazy to
get married and work for a living a lot
of them you'd be surprised

not all of them of course not even most
of them

but most of them really are not trying
very hard at all you know they're just
going for merit

to get a better rebirth or something
so any idea how you should deal with it
I mean you just gotta stand up for your
principles you got to do what you know
is right if you do what you consider to
be wrong just because you cave to
pressure even from your own parents
then I mean you're doing yourself a
serious disservice you have to follow
your own conscience
so I mean it may be that you'll get
disowned by your family and lose all of
your friends but it's more important to
do what you consider to be right and to
practice dhamma as intensively as you
can manage than to just cave and you
know like relinquish your spine and just

go along with with what they want you to
do I mean if I did what my parents
wanted me to do man I have grandkids by
now probably

so I think I'll just move on to nirmit's
next question did the Buddha ever crack
jokes

well that's kind of an interesting
question

um I mean there are no sutas where the
Buddha is

obviously doing some kind of stand-up
routine

um there is some humor in the text but
it tends to be pretty dry there's uh
one suit I think it's in the sum Utah

um that in CAF Reese Davidson's

translation she calls it little ugly the

suta on little ugly

and it's about some Demon that

um

it's sort of like there's been like an

episode of the old Star Trek that was

like this where you've got this entity

that's like feeding on negativity and

the more negative people are around and

this entity is becomes more glorious and

beautiful and powerful and so forth but

if people

um just start having positive mental

States then it kind of shrivels up and

becomes dark and ugly and weak again

um and I think in Rhys David's in in one

of her comments she says that the master
is in a humorous vein because it's told
in kind of a funny way

um there is that one verse of the
dhamapada where

you can you know each term in the in the
verse has like a down has like a dark
side

so it goes like you know the man who is
the man who is faithless burglar who uh
destroys opportunities and eats vomit he
truly is the highest of men something
like that

and I mean you can call that humor I
guess I mean why else would somebody
deliberately make this verse of the

Donald Potter I mean it's not necessarily going back to the boot of the devopana is not particularly old document

um but I mean why would somebody deliberately make a verse where you know each each one of the key words has like an alternate like an alter ego this alternative meaning that's like completely negative you know eating vomiting and so forth

um so I mean there is kind of some humor but it's it's very dry very you know very what's the word you know deadpan so

so yeah the Buddha I don't think you

really crack jokes and even like
laughing you know and our hunt doesn't
laugh according to tradition

I mean the most he might do is smile a
little bit probably even a tight lip
smile not showing his teeth

so

yeah cracking jokes is considered like
vulgar you know it's sort of like what
lay people do

so we'll just move on a nice question

this is from affinity

and avenidi says could you tell some
stories about witches and other Burmese
myths and legends

well I actually did an entire video

about like super supernaturalism or
paranormality in my life where I had a
number of witch stories in that one
my father as I've mentioned before was
um kind of warlock a trainer of which is
the leader of a coven

um so I mean I have some secondhand
stories from him I didn't actually
participate in any of his witchcraft
stuff

um Burmese missing Legends yeah I've
given lots of lots of examples I'm
trying to think of like some story that
I haven't already told

um with Burmese myths and legends
there's there's one book Burmese
supernaturalism by Melford Spiro who's

like a cultural Anthropologist he lived
in Burma back in the 60s I think
he has all kinds of weird stories about
uh

like there's a thing in in Burma it's
like a proverb that one in every seven
houses houses a witch

that that really they think there's
witches everywhere and I was I've been
warned about witches so many times and
uh

there was

let's see

there's a couple of stories about how
witches can detach their heads and then
the head will just be rolling around

just kind of moving around just by

Rolling and uh they eat excrement and so forth

um

but I'm trying to come up with a good

I mean I've already told the story about how I was supposedly attacked by magical ogres

it's kind of a long story

um I think that would be included in uh the paranormality in my life video that I I uploaded maybe a month or so ago

let's see which is

huh I mean to some degree I still am a little superstitious about like uh

it's it's it's known that at least among

some people that if a witch gets a hold
of like your hair or your fingernail
clippings or something they can they can
do spells against you and I've always
been kind of careful about you know like
throwing away my fingernail clippings
you know you just take them outside I
don't like throwing them in the garbage
either for some reason I just take them
outside and like toss them under a bush
or something

but uh Burmese missing Legends there's
lots and lots of them way way more
missing Legends
um of the traditional type than you'll
find in a western country

um

there's one one kind of uh I don't know
if you call it a myth or a legend but
there was

um a Burmese he was sort of like the
Burmese Samson

or like Hercules he was like this super
powerful man in Burmese uh Legend who
like Samson lost his power if he got his
hair cut

but this man he lost his power by
walking under a clothesline with women's
sarongs hanging on it and that just
deprived him of his his Mojo or or
whatever it was and to this day the
Burmese are real I mean they do not walk
under a clothesline of women's clothes

hanging on it partly because of this
Legend I think I remember one time
I mean as a Westerner I didn't give a
damn I didn't care I didn't know I just
walked under this clothesline that had
like women's clothing hanging on it and
there was a monk there who just
completely freaked out you know he just
stopped you know it was like
you know I I had just you know walked
naked through town or something you know
it was just Unthinkable to him that any
anyone would do that and so when I was
coming back the other way he was like
standing there blocking my route and
like waving me around you know don't do

it again

um there's one story I don't know if

I've told this one

um recently anyway but I was a junior

monk living in um

uh amrapura

and every morning I would walk across

this rickety old teak Bridge called

upain Bridge up and there was a village

on the other side talentamon Village and

I'd go for alms in talentamon village

and then walk back across this rickety

old teeth bridge and one day I was

walking for almost there and up ahead I

saw this young woman with like a rolled

up bamboo mat in one arm and a baby in

the other arm

and when I get there

she she spreads out the mat puts the

puts the baby on the mat and then asks

me if I will step over the baby and I

was just learning Burmese at the time I

hadn't been in Burma for very long and

I'm like let me get this straight you

want me to step over the baby and she's

like nodding real vigorously she really

was keen on the idea

and so I went okay so I stepped over the

baby and since I was on the other side

of the baby after stepping over it I

stepped over it again to get back on you

know the side of the road

and she was real happy about that

and she ran down to this little booth
and bought me some toothpaste and stuff
and offered that out of gratitude for me
stepping over the baby
and uh apparently the Burmese believed
that like a holy man who she considered
me to be one
um a whole if a holy man is like moves
over the top of somebody it drives out
you know evil spirits and so forth
so apparently she thought that I was
driving evil spirits out of her baby or
maybe it was just like a prophylaxis you
know just making sure that the baby
didn't have any malevolent you know
forces or beings or entities or anything
um I I did that more than once stepping

over babies

but um yeah most of my stories like that the super or the paranormality in my life video I I give quite a lot of stories like that of just paranormal events and just stories about paranormal events

you know seeing apparitions and being warned about witches and dragons and ogres and so forth there's lots of them in Burma these people believe that there are lots of them in Burma

so I'm sorry I couldn't come up with a really juicy one that that I haven't already told yet I mean I'm sure they're they're in here in my head somewhere and

if I come up with any more I'll try and
uh share them

but I think I'll just move on to the
next next question here which is from
Edelweiss Voyager

and Edelweiss says

hello Ponyo I was wondering if you
incorporate prostrations into your
practice at all personally I find
prostrating and apologizing to the gods
from my weakness to be spiritually
healing

um

yeah I've never really been very like
idolatrour or worshipy I have bowed to
that statue

probably many times but it's it's not

like a regular practice or anything it's
like there are certain times in my life
um to be honest the uh the most I ever
bowed to a statue like the most
intensively and fervently was I was in
Burma

oh maybe seven eight years ago by now
and this may be 2016
and somebody had given me this little
vial of liquid LSD
and

um there was supposed to be just like
one dose left in the bottle but whoever
put it in put in more drops than than it
was supposed to be and I wound up taking
this

like probably the largest dose of LSD
I've ever had or oh wait no it's the
time before that time before I'm sorry
but anyway I was high on LSD and I was
just bowing to that Buddha statue over
and over again I was my my
the place where I was staying was this
little room off to the side of the main
congregation Hall of this Monastery and
so it was like this big altar this
Shrine right right in the front of the
car the back of the room in this little
alcove
and I just bowing and bowing and bowing
I was just kind of overflowing with
gratitude you know
but as a general rule

uh yeah I've just never been very
worshipy or faith oriented I've always
been more intellectual and philosophical
in my understanding of dhamma and uh
mostly I would not Ballad of statues I'd
be in Burma and we'd be doing it we'd
start doing a ceremony you know all the
monks would come together to recite the
padimoka or whatever and all the Burmese
monks would bow to the Statue and I
would just kind of sit there
because I don't know maybe you know
being having been a Christian in a
previous life I've got this thing about
idolatry or something
um another thing that reminds me

Edelweiss Voyager says here I find
prostrating and apologizing to the gods
for my weakness to be spiritually
healing

um it could be as a result of having
been a Christian in a past life

um I've been told that I was a Baptist
minister in the lifetime immediately
preceding this one

um who was my own grandfather
incidentally

but um

it was like a mantra that would come up
it doesn't come up very often anymore
but there was a time in my life when it
would come up a lot it was just dear God
please have mercy upon me or dear God

please have mercy I wouldn't say dear
God please have mercy upon me a sinner
like I think it's in the Book of Luke
that The Gospel According to Luke
there's you've got the the tax collector
in the back of the standing in the back
of the temple beating his breast and you
know dear God please have mercy upon me
a sinner

um just dear God please have mercy
you know it was it was like this little
prayer that would just get repeated like
a mantra sometimes just without me
deliberately trying to do it it's like I
do home spontaneously still even even
now it just comes up spontaneously

sometimes especially

um

if I'm walking or or waiting for
something and waiting in line or
something

um but yeah I do not incorporate
prostrations into my practice

uh it can happen spontaneously but not
very often

it's just not my Approach different
people have different approaches some
people are more heart oriented more
faith oriented other people you know
they're they're more brain head oriented
you know it's

different I mean I'm not saying that
it's wrong or any any such thing but

it's just not the route that I have
taken in life

so I'm just going to move on to the next
question here and this is from ketchup
not catsup mind you but ketchup and he
says hello Ponyo I was wondering if you
had any thoughts on my poem

and I think the title of the poem is Art
of being and it's it's about meditation
and so I'll just recite this poem here

Adam's space whole body

boot in breath do out breath warm and

soft well and happy smile all beings

heart raise awareness concentration

emptiness Detachment is highest just

being

and then he says thank you

so

um it's it strikes me as inspirational

it strikes me as optimistic that it's

you know it's entirely upbeat you know

there's no dwelling on dukkha or

impermanence I mean maybe a little bit

of impermanence but it's it's not

anything that's

that's inspiring some Vega or spiritual

urgency or alarm it's it's pretty soft

and you know if you're into warm and

soft well and happy

um

so I suppose if somebody needs

some optimism and uplift this kind of

poem would be a good thing although in

traditional taravada

um you know there's also like the the
negative side the Dark Side of samsara
that really should be paid more
attention to and that's you know the
inevitability of death you know the
first Noble Truth you know to exist is
to be unhappy to be dissatisfied you
know that that sort of thing is actually
more of a traditional Buddhist theme
than the the warm and soft well and
happy stuff although some people need
the warm and soft well and happy stuff
too
so um yeah I mean you can derive benefit
from reading this kind of thing

I'm reading it again

I don't want to miss anything important

boot in-breath dough out breath that's

that's a common tie practice just using

budo as a kind of uh

a mantra

smile all beings heart Rays yeah it's

very heartwarming kind of warm and soft

upbeat optimistic kind of poem which in

a way makes it not

really like traditional Buddhist poetry

because

you know Buddhist poetry is is tends to

be more

kind of I wouldn't say pessimistic but

facing the the dark aspects of samsara

you know the or just

scrutinizing some Sora and finding it
lacking

and in a way this does this in a
positive way because you know Detachment
is highest and so forth

but thank you for sharing

so I'll just uh move on to the next
question here this is from nml794

and nml794 says

do you think the Buddha actually claimed
to remember all his past lives that just
seems to be a stock phrase repeated in
the sutas with no substantiation the
Buddha never talked about his past lives
as a hundred gatherer or an alien with
advanced technology all of the recorded

stories as far as I know are
conveniently set in the Ganges Valley
with the berminical Society of 5th
Century BC India perhaps the early
followers invented this idea of past
life omniscience in order to deify the
Buddha which would make sense given the
later Mahayana Tendencies to deify him
even further well yeah early Buddhists
did uh glorify the Buddha you know they
they tried to insist that he was still
human you know born of a woman and
everything but
um you know 27 feet tall and and born
without any goop on him and he's walking
around talking right after being born
and so forth

um yeah it's there's obviously some glorification of the Buddha with some mythological elements uh included even in taravada

but uh

let's see do I think the Buddha actually claimed to remember all his past lives I don't know maybe he did but I think I'm blurry now I don't know what happened here go like this see if that works whoop

it'll fix itself probably

so do I think the Buddha actually claimed to remember all his past lives maybe he did but I doubt that he would go into details especially with a guard

to having been an alien with tentacles
breathing liquid methane that I mean it
was just weird people out they wouldn't
get it at all it would just confuse them
um even talking about foreign cultures
that the people of the the Ganges Valley
you know 500 BC that you know they just
wouldn't be able to relate to it and you
have to be careful I mean the Buddha did
say that you know the stuff he knew I
mean he could only share a small amount
because if he told them everything their
minds would just be full of doubt and
agitation
so it may be that he just read his
audience so to speak
and told them what he figured they would

find acceptable that they were ready to hear

so it is possible that he did claim to remember all of his past lives that he was in a sense omniscient

but I mean how can you really know for sure I mean the texts say it

but again like like nml 794 here is saying you know it's like everything is always within the context of you know

the the Iron Age Ganges Valley I mean you might go into hell I mean the Buddha was in Hell Realms and Heaven Realms and so forth that technically weren't India but still it was all in accordance with Indian conceptions of reality and

cosmology and so forth

so let's see

uh

yeah I guess I guess I've answered that

question so I'll just move on to the

next question this is from Naga Kai

and nagakai says is it possible to avoid

accumulating Bad Karma and it kind of

bugs me that I'm blurring

I don't know why please please stand by

yeah still blurry

still blurry

technology is wonderful isn't it

nagakai says is it possible to avoid

accumulating Bad Karma by getting

someone else to do the hateful or the

harmful action

I.E if I pay someone to do something that results in Bad Karma or just convince them to do it using persuasion does it go to him instead of me well it goes to both of you like you want to kill somebody's but you don't really want to eat like you're squeamish about blood or something so you hire a hit man to kill that person well the Hitman is committing the murder but you are accessory to that murder like a monk who pays uh who gets a hit man to kill somebody then I mean if the Hitman succeeds in killing the person the Monk Is excommunicated for life or being accessory to murder

so

I mean monks do this kind of stuff all the time especially monks that are living in a monastery where grass has to be cut you know like bushes have to be trimmed along the side of the path to keep the path from getting overgrown that kind of thing so they'll say you know make this allowable you know copy you know copy is like the Burmese word for copia which means allowable you know make it

is what you're supposed to say in certain circumstances which uh it's it's sort of like cheating it's like a loophole in the rules like a monk is not allowed to damage plants green plants

he's not allowed to encourage others or
cause others to damage plants so you
just use this cryptic language of make
it allowable and then the monastery
attendant or the knowledgeable layperson
goes ah he wants me to cut the plants
but still I mean it's breaking the exact
same rule

but that's ecclesiastical rules and not
uh actual Karma

you know it's sort of like the
ecclesiastical level of the action
rather than the karmic level of the
action but still I mean if you want that
person dead for example I mean you're
already making Bad Karma you know you're

talking somebody else into killing them
then you're already making Bad Karma it
may not be as bad as killing the person
yourself but still it's not good and
it's not neutral either you're you're
actually

increasing suffering just by your
actions and you know it and it's you
know it's motivated by hatred or or just
ruthless greed or whatever it is
so

it goes to both of you if you persuade
somebody to do a bad action that you
don't want to do yourself

so I'll just move one on the next
question this is from Austin

and we've been at this for over an hour

and a half now

Austin says

did the Buddha meditate without moving

for 49 without food or water I assume it

means 49 days so I did the Buddha

meditate without moving for 49 days

without food or water

and that is a legend that the Buddha sat

in meditation for 49 days

sort of

digesting his Enlightenment experience

and according to taravada it was mainly

he's going through the 12 need Donna

theory of dependent polarizing potential

you know it's like you know he's going

through it forwards and then backwards

and then forwards and backwards and so forth but he wasn't he didn't meditate without moving for 49 days because every once in a while every several days like every week he'd get up and move to a different place you know he didn't sit under the booty tree that whole time but

I think there's a good chance that this also is a legend

and uh may not be historically accurate and it's still bothering me that I'm still blurry

if I go like this what if that helps

huh yeah I should kick it

if I go like this I'm kind of in focus

hmm

so okay so I think I answered that one
did the Buddha meditate without moving
49 days even according to tradition he
did move after you know several days of
sitting in one place to get up and sit
somewhere else

um I'm not sure that it would even be
possible to go without water in the
tropics for 49 days or a subtropics boat
guy I'm not exactly sure well what the
latitude is there

um but then again

like very advanced

spiritual practitioners can do things

that should be impossible for others

like um

not eating for example

so

yeah I'd be skeptical of that personally

but then again I'm a skeptical Westerner

type so I'll just move on to Austin's

next question could someone with ADHD

theoretically become enlightened or is

their brain too distracted to make any

meaningful progress

well someone with attention

deficit

something disorder I don't know what the

H is

it's somebody within a with a very short

attention span could they theoretically

become enlightened well theoretically

certainly they could

um

I think it may be that if you know even though your attention is flitting around if you're still mindful you know if it's not you're not just going completely off the track and becoming unmindful you know after three seconds

but I mean you don't have to focus on just one thing like some on top meditation where you're just focused on one thing you know it's like a candle flame or a casino disc or just your breath going you know your breath sensation of touch at your nostrils when you're breathing

I mean you can so like like the mahasi

method or many kinds of weipasana

so-called reposa mindfulness meditation

I mean your your attention can be moving

all over the place but so long as you're

still mindful you're still successfully

meditating you're still meditating

correctly

um

so I mean I wouldn't say that it's

impossible I would say it's less likely

that you become enlightened I mean the

more you can calm and silence and

clarify and purify the mind the more

likely it is that you're going to become

enlightened but some people need a

higher level of clarity and Purity than

others

so I mean some people they don't need to get Advanced genic States to become enlightened apparently so you know a person like that who just has this quickness of mind so to speak this kind of a talent that you know you don't have to get very far before you can make the the Quantum Leap into the absolute so to speak

so yeah I would say someone with ADHD regardless of what the H stands for um they could still theoretically become enlightened although the more they could Master their own mental processes or you know just at least remain mindful while their mind is doing its thing

then the more likely it is they would become aligned so I wouldn't say it's completely impossible but um I would say they'd have statistically a lower chance than someone who is a master of fourth genre

so we'll just move on to Austin's next question which is is it true that advaita vedanta played a role in buddhism's departure from the Indian subcontinent well I would say that uh buddhism's departure from the Indian subcontinent occurred before advaita vedanta existed

I mean if advaita vedanta was like I mean like the main philosopher of invite of vedanta as far as I know is

shankara who lived in like the 5th
Century CE

which was long after Buddhism left the
Indian subcontinent

um advice

or advaita vedanta in certain schools of
Mahayana Buddhism definitely were

interacting with each other through like
uh debates monks debating each other and
sort of borrowing ideas from each other
and so forth but

um I think that was long after Buddhism
had already migrated moved into Central
Asia like Ashoka who's

uh really not that long after the time
of the Buddha

uh he sent missionaries out in various
directions

and um

also around the time of Ashoka you had
like a

um a lot of Buddhists kind of moving
into like what is now Pakistan and
Afghanistan and it was largely through
Central Asia converting to Buddhism that
it finally got into China
north of the Himalayas

so

um I think advaita vedanta may have
played some role in Buddhism spreading
outside of India but I think it was not
very significant I think it would be a
very minor contribution

and I'm still blurry how do I stop being
blurry

how do I do this

you just got to deal with blurry just
just knit or something while you listen
to this

so the next question is from erain and
airing says what is the Dharma of The
Little Prince so The Little Prince is
probably most of you are aware is like a
little Illustrated story

um almost like an art book

by some French person whose name I can't
pronounce

and um

there there is some kind of Dharma in it

but I have to I have to give a disclaimer here that I have not read the book in probably at least 35 years so it's my memory of the little princess kind of sketchy I haven't seen any movie versions of it in about 35 years either but

um I mean there is some Dharma that comes to mind like there is a certain emphasis on the inevitability of death I remember a long time ago I was maybe 21 years old at the time maybe 20.

I was watching a claymation version of The Little Prince and I actually got choked up got tears in my eyes in the scene where the snake that talks in riddles is telling the Little Prince

that it's time for him to die
so I mean there's acceptance of death
you know death itself in The Little
Prince there's like the talk about the
baobabs how you know you have to get you
have to weed the baobabs before they
turn into these huge trees because then
you can't do anything I mean that's
um that's a lot there's there's Dharma
in that there's a famous Burmese Seattle
um Seattle

uh who says that uh you know a person is
like a tree that if the tree is small
and crooked you can straighten it out
but once the tree gets big you can't
straighten it out anymore which is

similar to the whole story of the

baobabs and the Little Prince

um I think there's a lot of emphasis in

The Little Prince of just following your

own heart and your own conscience rather

than just conforming you know so if you

follow your own heart and your own

conscience you're more likely to see the

uh you know the elephant being swallowed

by the the python instead of a hat you

know like towards the beginning of the

the beginning of the story

so I guess what I'm gonna have to do is

just read the book again and then maybe

I can give like a a Buddhist critique of

The Little Prince

because

um

I mean I'm not saying that the Little Prince is you know as darmic as you know some Buddhist Sutra or something but um you know it's to some degree it's just really kind of a nice story
yeah

but there is some Dharma in it and I'll have to read the book again in order to really get into details on that
so I'll just move on to the next question

after uh consuming a little more of these

bovine glandular secretions

this question is from ludovis balam

and ludovus balam says do you have any
memories of your distinguishing
personality traits at the age the ages
of two to four

if so mind sharing well my earliest
memory I think is my third birthday so
the the whole second third

see third year of my life now between
two and three is a blank I don't
remember anything from that time

um I've got very few memories that go
back that far you know it's like the
myelin sheaths of my my neurons are not
fully formed yet

and uh you know my long-term memory
wasn't fully hooked up

but I do know some stories of when I was

really little that that do kind of
indicate what I was going to turn into
like one story that my father used to
like to tell is I don't remember this
personally but he used to tell the story
of when I was like two years old
and my mother was making biscuits for
dinner you know she had the biscuits out
on the this cookie cookie sheet and then
she remembered she needed something so
she had to run to the store to get some
ingredient for dinner she asks my father
who's drinking a beer watching TV in the
living room keep an eye on the kid which
she said okay and then just continues
drinking the beer and watching the TV

and I toddle you know a little
two-year-old me toddles into the living
room and starts seeing turtles in the
water turtles in the water
and my father didn't understand what I
was talking about you know he didn't
care he's just drinking the beer and
watching TV finally my mother comes home
goes into the kitchen and sees that I've
I climbed up on a chair and took some of
the the raw biscuits off the cookie
sheet and put them in the dog's water
and was calling them turtles in the
water so I mean I was just had like this
weird sense of humor ever since I was
like two years old I remember one time
when I was like

four

my brother was still an infant

an infant baby

and uh I remember I had this big stuffed
monkey or chimpanzee yours it was like a
big stuff primate of some sort

and I put that in my bed and then I I
climbed underneath my brother's crib and
was like lying on the floor there so
then my mother came in she thought that
the the large stuffed monkey with me
until she you know bent over to kiss it
good night and realized it wasn't me and
then looked around and saw me hiding
under the crib of my brother so I mean I
was kind of a non-conformist you know

just sort of bucking the tide even as a
small child and I had like a offbeat
sense of humor even as a toddler
apparently

I mean I was I would specialize in
telling nursery rhymes wrong I don't
know if little kids even tell nursery
rhymes anymore like when you're three or
four years old you know you get taught
to recite like Humpty Dumpty and you
know Hickory Dickory Dock and all that
kind of stuff I would say them along on
purpose

so

the only other distinguishing
personality trait I mean I don't know if
this would even count but it's one of my

earliest memories I remember my father had a motorcycle and he was trying to teach my mother how to ride a motorcycle and if we're in the backyard and the only thing she could possibly hit would be my swing set

and of course she gets on the motorcycle makes a beeline straight for the swing set swing set just smashes into it and Falls the motor see in the motorcycle fall over and I remember running up to her and her leg was bleeding you know she she cut her leg somehow and for me I started crying you know I was a little kid at the time and uh because you know up to that point

little kids you know they just assume that adults don't get hurt or bleed or something you know it's like they're like the gods and you know little kids obviously get hurt but I mean your parents aren't supposed to get hurt so I mean that kind of scared me but I don't know if that would be a distinguishing personality trait that was just sort of like like an Insight that even adults can get messed up and have you know accidents and injuries and so forth but uh yeah the weird sense of humor and the sort of non-conformism has been a distinguishing personality trait of mine since I was a toddler so I'll just move on to ludibus balam's next question if

you had to pick between one of the
mystery Cults of ancient Greece which
would you pick well I'm no Authority on
Ancient Greek mystery Cults but what
little I know

I suppose I'd join orphism I'd be an
orphist is that what they're called I
would yeah I'd be a member of the orphic
Mysteries they believed in like
reincarnation and so forth I'm pretty
sure

um

I don't know maybe a Pythagorean is it
well but the pythagoreans I don't know
if you'd even call that a mystery column
so let's just go with orphism

unless I was uh sort of like a social climber and then maybe I'd go for the elucinian Mysteries because it was like all the aristocrats would joined that one sort of like being a Freemason or something but let's just let's just say orphism for now

so the next question is from the Arya sawasti project

and the Aria sawasdi project says hi Ponyo recently ajan punadamo was giving a talk on Meta Meta mediation this is one of the most common

typos that that Buddhists make is

spelling meditation as a mediation

because it doesn't get the red underline

because it's like another it's another

word so you don't notice I'll just start over

hi Ponyo recently ajan punodama was giving a talk on meta meditation and broadcasting meta to others I see how this can benefit the meditator but do you suppose the recipients of the broadcasted meta benefit from it and do you suppose it changes their experience during the meditation mediation as well on the flip side of this topic can someone feel the effects of ill will from others and lastly if one has enough meta at all times would that buffer them from ill will from others supposing it could be felt well

yeah I think that if you're just gushing
love or beaming love like sincere love
towards another person they're gonna
pick up on it unless maybe they're just
a complete sociopath and cut off from
like the deeper intuitive levels but I
do remember my preceptor a venerable
flying jet Seattle

he didn't like me much he thought that
westerners were just like wild
barbarians that we you know we weren't
Burmese enough to be really good
Buddhist people

and he just he just didn't like me very
much and uh but then one day
I just I was just feeling like this warm
feeling in my chest and like it was like

it just felt really good I didn't know why and then it turned out that at that exact time that client at Seattle was leading meta meditation in in the shrine room in the main building in the monastery and probably just beaming love in all directions and I think I I sincerely think I picked up on some of that and uh yeah there is like a deeper level where we're all kind of connected or at least we're receptive and sensitive to you know other people's feelings I mean all it takes is somebody who's just beaming love and benevolence sitting on a bus and it's going to have effects on the people

around him even if he's not doing anything he might just be minding his own business looking out the window or something still people are going to pick up on that and likewise you can have someone who's just just in this black mood you know he's just wanting to kill everybody and he doesn't have to say or do anything he can just sit there and it's gonna have like an effect on the people around him that mental states are contagious which is why which is a list of 38 blessings blessing number one is avoiding people avoiding the company of fools not associating with fools because mental states are contagious if

you associate with fools their
foolishness is going to rub off on you
and if you associate with the wise which
is the second blessing then their wisdom
and goodness is going to rub off on you
it's going to influence your mind
you know there is a certain there is
some truth to a mob mentality and it
goes both ways it can be good or bad
so let's see

yeah yeah I do think that uh I mean
there are lots of stories of
um

there was lot lots of stories of like
a Buddhist person in Burma and like
their boss is just giving them a hard

time just doesn't like them as being
mean to them asshole and so they the
person who is the recipient of this
is from the boss goes to uh some
wise Seattle some wise Monk and he'll
he'll give them instructions on how to
do meta meditation towards the boss and
I remember one case where within just uh
like a week or two the boss just had a
sudden change of heart and called the
person into his office and sincerely
apologized you know I realize now that
I've I've been treating you badly and I
am sorry and this kind of thing there's
lots of stories in that kind of thing
so yeah I mean
I think anyone with any sensitivity can

know that mental States really are contagious you don't have to do anything like overtly outwardly to really influence the mind of another person so let's say let's see can someone feel the effects of ill will from others yeah I mean if someone's just pissed off and I mean just to give an obvious example you know you're in this you're in the same room with someone who's just really upset I mean it's just gonna it's the whole atmosphere is gonna be like lead you know it's just you just pick up on it even animals can pick up on this kind of thing like my father used to say

sneaking up on a moose is almost impossible if you're moose hunting trying to sneak up on the Moose almost impossible the Moose will always get spooked and run off but if you sneak up on the tree next to the Moose it's as easy as hunting cows because we just have this like a sixth sense I guess you know we can pick up on that kind of thing

okay so let's see lastly if one has enough meta at all times would that buffer them from ill will from others yeah if you've got meta at all times you're gonna have good karma you know not only will it buffer you if someone's trying to mess you up but people will

just be less likely to want to mess you
up

then you're just a good guy I mean it's
like if you're if you're full of love
towards everybody there aren't very many
people that are really going to want to
mess with you

and furthermore I mean that's just like
a kind of a superficial worldly level
but you know at the more metaphysical
level you're just generating such good
karma you're creating a better world
that you're living in where it's just
less likely that bad stuff is going to
happen to you and I keep kind of
glancing out the window because there's

a storm moving and

so

I think I answered that question

so I'm going to move on to the next

question this is from pseudonym and as I

keep saying I doubt that's his real name

and pseudonym says can you please

provide a steel man argument for the

spiritual benefits one gains from the

abhidham and I asked him what a steel

man argument is and he said it's like

the opposite of a straw man where you're

you're making as strong of a case as

possible even though you don't really

necessarily believe it to be true which

is kind of like sophistry I guess

so can I please provide a sophisticated

what's the word sophist

ical argument for the spiritual benefits

one gains from Abby Donald well it's an

intellectual exercise you do learn a lot

of Buddhist philosophy

um in a way it can be sort of like

reading the New Testament of the Bible

where at least you're knowing what

you're rejecting

so I mean there is that I mean it isn't

good for any kind of literate

knowledgeable educated terravonna

Buddhist to know what abhidham is about

because he should know what the Orthodox

party line of his system is saying even

if he's not following it even if he

doesn't think the Buddha really taught
I'll be Dharma and I think most
westerners don't believe that the Buddha
really taught abhidham open with regard
to Western monks I've I've seen the the
number kicked around maybe 70 of Western
monks do not believe that the Buddha
really taught abhidham
but it's sort of like a way of
systematizing dhamma where you've got
all these lists and classifications and
so forth so it can help you to
understand philosophically
intellectually certain aspects of
like older more traditional
dhamma
plus it's just intellectual exercise it

can help Stave off

um early onset dementia

I guess

and uh again one of the main benefits of

abhidharma is at least your literate and

knowledgeable in Theravadin Orthodoxy so

that even if you reject abhidham at

least you have a good idea of what it is

you're rejecting

so I'll just move on to the next

question and this is from I'm pretty

sure it's from Yuichiro but his name is

spelled in Japanese characters so I'm

pretty sure it's Yuichiro

and Yuichiro I think says hypothetically

if someone resolved to do more good

things in the future but out of The
Selfish desire for Comic karmic rewards
would the net Karma of this still be
positive yeah it depends on the
individual

um but as a general rule

if you're doing something good and
you're just doing because you want to
get into heaven you know it's pretty
common pretty common theme in in Western
religions also like Christianity and
Islam for example you're going for the
going for those heavenly virgins or
something

or you're just trying to stay out of
Hellfire

um still I mean you're doing good things

you know you're you're increasing
happiness decreasing misery you know
among the beings around you so I mean
you're still doing good but um
the Burmese are really susceptible to
this I mean they're very developed but
in Burma may be the most thoroughly
Buddhist country in the world
and the people there tend to be
spiritual materialists you know they're
they're just they're wanting Merit they
want coup though they call it
information this is the Burmese way of
of saying kusala you know like
you know wholesome action
they want to though they want Merit

and so

um

they can be really proud about the Good
Deeds that they do you know they they
donate a meditation cabin to a monastery
they'll have a big sign over the
meditation cabin this this meditation
cabin donated by you know such and such
such and such and their family members
are all there and
um and I remember once
my teacher venerable Tom Pulu tell us
another Seattle who gave a dhamma talk
about if you really want the most Merit
then you should do it uh Good Deeds
without the desire for merit which is in
a way it was kind of like up the

minds of the audience it's like I want to get the most Merit possible so I'm going to have to do this without Desiring Merit and so that's what I'm gonna do and it's you know it's just like self-contradictory because that's they're obviously trying to maximize the amount of Good Karma that they get so they're you know it's spiritual materials it's like anyone who has read Burmese Days by George Orwell George Orwell the author of Animal Farm in 1984. he lived in Burma during colonial times he was some sort of police officer in central Burma and one of his earlier novels was called Burmese

days about what it was like for a
British colonialists living in Burma
and the main villain of the story is who
poach in he's just really just this bad
man Burmese guy and his wife is
continually scolding him in her demure
passive Burmese ladylike way telling him
he's an evil man he's going to go to
hell and he's saying no you don't know
anything I'm going to build a pagoda
because the Burmese think that if you
donate a pagoda you have a pagoda built
I mean that's like you guarantee heaven
right there you've made so much Merit
it's just the stairway to heaven right
there but unfortunately for who poaching
he had a stroke before he ever had the

got the time to build the Pagoda so he
was pretty much screwed

so yeah I mean if you do good deeds out
of The Selfish desire for karmic rewards
I mean you're you're still going to get
the karmic rewards just not as good of
karmic rewards if you just do something
out of just the goodness of your heart
just just irrespective of any desire for
benefit like the Burmese spiritual
materialists that they are bless their
hearts you know I don't want to badmouth
them

but I used to tell them I mean as a
young monk in Burma I was I'd have these
little debates friendly friendly polite

debates with the local Village doctor
who spoke English
and saying I mean you I mean it's better
to feed a hungry child or even a hungry
dog than just set an extra plate of food
on a plate on the table before like an
obese monk who's already got 10 times as
much food as he can possibly eat
you know and then that's the way the
Burmese are you've got some famous
Seattle you know he's he's got the
reputation for being a saint or a sage
and at lunch time he's got this huge I
mean I used to have this sometimes too
this whole table
covered with like 20 20 different dishes
of food and there's no way he could eat

10 of that but still people are wanting to somehow fit more food onto the table and he doesn't need it on the other hand there might be like a hungry kid down the road

I mean the skinny dirty polar I mean a little kid never gets to eat food that good and probably I mean if you do it just out of the goodness of your heart you'd make more Merit anyway because you're motivated not by Greed for merit you're doing it out of like compassion and benevolence you know I mean you just want you want to do good just for its own sake or it makes you happy to see some hungry being getting a full belly

for once

I mean even for me just I'd be happier feeding some scroungy mangy dog than putting just another plate of food on this table for some famous monk in general I mean there might be exceptions I might not like the dog very much and it may be that you know the monk really you just have a lot of respect and gratitude towards this teacher and you know you want to make some little contribution to him in the hopes that maybe he'll have at least one taste of what you put there

um

so yeah this is another another one of my trademark long answers to short

questions

see here

so I'll just read the question again
just to make sure hypothetically if
someone resolved to do more good things
in the future but out of The Selfish
desire for karmic rewards with the net
Karma of this still be positive yeah it
would still be more positive than
negative unless you really had some
really awful mental States accompanying
the outwardly good act
and it's it's just a sliding scale I
mean like I keep saying over and over
again it's like the action itself
um is not really what makes the karma

you know the outward physical action it may like magnify or intensify the karma because you're really just going through with it you're not just kind of fantasizing about it you're just really you've you know you've crossed the line you're doing it so I mean it's sort of intensifies your karma but really it's the mental States that determine the the karmic quality of of your actions and just desire for heaven or desire for a good rebirth that is not evil in and of itself you know in a way it kind of makes the good act a little less karmically pure but still you're doing good and I mean you're not harming anybody except for maybe in very

subtle indirect ways yourself but

you're doing more good than bad

and so finally the very last question

this is from achala I think that's how

you pronounce his name

it's almost like a tradition that people

who ask questions have difficult names

to pronounce

so

a challah says or ic-a-l-a

he says do you think whatever we are

going through today has happened in the

past at some point like many culpas ago

since samsara has no beginning point it

would be absurd to accept that whatever

we are experiencing in the society today

is happening for the first time like
rise of A.I covid or any other invention
in the chakavati sutta Buddha describes
the rise and fall of a society so we can
think it's a cycle that repeats in
samsara

um yeah but it's not just temporal
distance I mean we're not living in a
four-dimensional universe it's not just
three dimensions of space plus time it's
not Newtonian that in all likelihood
we're living in a many worlds you know
there's an infinite number of versions
of reality however many versions are
possible are there and they're all
pretty much superimposed so it's not
just

um you know every possible world has
happened and will continue happening in
the scientific astronomical universe
that you've got other dimensions other
probabilities you know you move sideways
through time and you get into other
probabilities where you know the Nazis
won World War II or something or or
whatever

so I really do think that all possible
realities all possible samisarcic
realities uh I mean they're already here
I mean if if not in our version of
reality in some other version which is
just as real or unreal as this
so

with regard to let's say

other human societies with the rise of

artificial intelligence transhumanism

the technological singularity is

happening in infinite number of times

it's happening an infinite number of

times now

it's going to happen an infinite number

of times in the future anything that can

possibly happen in an infinite universe

is going to happen

it just keeps happening

so I really don't limit myself to four

dimensions

but even with four dimensions sure I

mean

um

you know out there in in the space you
know in some other Galaxy you've got you
know some Star Trek kind of universe
with with people speaking English with
an American accent who you know it's
they're just slight differences
or more major differences
so sure

um

let's see I gotta read this question
over again just to make sure I get it
right or at least that I understand the
question not necessarily they don't
answer it correctly do you think
whatever we are going through today has
happened in the past at some point like

many culpas ago

um yeah or

you know sideways in time or or whatever

since samsara has no beginning point it

would be absurd to accept that whatever

we are experiencing in the society today

is happening for the first time like the

rise of AI covet or any other invention

okay yeah so it's you know like the I

think it's uh The Book of Ecclesiastes

in the Old Testament says there's

nothing new Under the Sun

um now there's obviously new things

under our thought I don't think there's

ever been cell phones

or silicon chips on this planet with our

sun but I mean it's probably happened

infinite number of times and will
continue to happen an infinite number of
times

um just in other versions of reality
other worlds whatever

so yeah it's a lot of people are just
kind of limited in their thinking just
because they just assume that the
scientific materialistic Universe pretty
well describes reality and I don't think
it's I mean it describes what we are in
right now our version of reality pretty
well but there's like an infinite number
of versions

all equally real or unreal

and uh

yeah I mean it's not ultimately real
anyway

so that's it I did it

only less than two hours and 10 minutes

so that's not bad I I am kind of time

conscious I don't want to subject people

to three hour long videos because I

rarely would sit through a three hour

long video myself

so

there you go I hope I did Justice to

your questions I'm sorry for the delay I

probably should have done this last

weekend but just didn't have the time

and um feel free to ask questions

you get at least six questions if

there's a dearth of questions we may

even go more than six but uh

I I promise I'll answer at least six

and uh

feel free to leave your questions below

in the comments or if you have access to

my subscribe star you can leave them

there you have access to the Discord

server you can leave them there

you're very welcome to subscribe to my

channel on bitshoot or YouTube

and leave a like if you're so inclined

and be happy

hello and welcome to episode 53 of
question and answer I am your host as
usual poo

basa and it's only been a week since the
last Q&A but I've gotten a lot of
questions probably more than I got in
the previous three weeks so I figure I
shouldn't uh shouldn't just uh
procrastinate and uh start answering
questions make hay with the sunshines
and all that and uh

first I have to like sit here and chill
out a little bit you know I sit here in
silence for five minutes and then I just
sit here and like give some kind of
random monologue before I start

answering questions it's it's like a tradition now so I'm just kind of like decompressing or chilling out you know getting into the groove so to speak and uh I guess I should start answering questions now huh and the first question is from ch is and this was supposed to be answered like two episodes ago he asked the question late after I'd already recorded episode like 51 or whatever it was um and then I neglected to to add it to the next list so this is this is like a month ago he asked this question and uh I should say that trox is or however you pronounce it um he very generously sent me the means

to get a new uh video camera which is uh
very nice of him and uh I haven't got it
yet but um in the last episode the
previous episode um I went blurry for
like the last 15 20 minutes of the video
it's the the camera is supposed to have
autofocus but what it was focusing on I
have no

idea because uh my face was not the the
object of of the focus

so I'll probably get that we'll see if
there's any

Improvement um but anyways I should
answer this question so Traxis

says a while ago you said that in your
tradition monks do not lie down is it

hard is it

easy what I mean

is if I was not to lie down for a few days I would surely fall asleep without any problem in any POS any possible position

so after initial struggle is it hard to sleep not in the horizontal position so what he's referring to is um the sitter practice it's one of the 13 Danga

practices of a terraa Buddhist monk um there are like optional additional

aesthetic practices and one of those is never lying down you sleep in a sitting position and um the tradition in which I was ordained the T Pulu tradition it was traditional for monks not to lie down in

that tradition um so for my first
well let's say yeah my first maybe
almost two years as a monk I did the the
sitters practice but when I got to Burma
like Central Burma the Blazing furnace
of central Burma I quickly realized that
the coolest position is to be flat on
your back spread eagle on a concrete
floor so
that's pretty much how I started
sleeping which is kind of aesthetic in
and of itself sleeping on a concrete
floor with a piece of wood for a pillow
but um I mean it sounds aesthetic but I
mean really seriously it was the most
comfortable way of sleeping at the time

because the concrete is cool you're
close to the floor where it's coolish
and the piece of wood doesn't absorb
sweat like a cloth pillow does a cloth
pillow starts smelling like an old gym
sock or something something an old work
glove pretty

quickly so anyway um he's asking is it
hard to do the sitters practice and for
me it was it was it was not easy to get
into the habit of sitting um as I've
explained before each of the 13 dangas
has three levels according to the wiui
Maga easy medium and hard and most of
the Tulu monks would do the easy way
which is they'd sit in a chair which was
kind of almost a reclining chair chair

they're made out of like bamboo and you know they're tilted back at about a 45° angle so that you're kind of reclining when you're sleeping and they're fairly comfortable although they're all way too small for me my head would just be hanging off the back of the thing so I couldn't really use those and anyway I wanted to be a little more rigorous than that so I went for the medium level and the medium level of the sitter's practice is you're allowed to lean back against something like lean back against a wall or against a board or another option is you take a like a cord or a belt or something and you can

like you sit with your knees up and then you put it around your knees and your back and that kind of holds you up but I lean back against a board and um it was it was surprisingly difficult because at first for for you a few weeks at least i' I'd fall asleep in the sitting position and then I'd wake up like 2 and in the morning lying on my side like flopped over in the middle of the night and I didn't notice there are a few times I'd be sitting cross-legged and I'd flop over and I'd still be cross-legged you know my legs would still be like this sort of like a Buddha statue tilted on its side but uh yeah it it was difficult for

me um let's see if let's see what I mean
is if I this is CH Alex is saying what I
mean is if I was not to lie down for a
few days I would surely fall asleep
without any problem any possible
position still it's it's difficult to
stay in the sitting position I mean it's
easy just to like flop over and be
horizontal after you fall
asleep so I guess I answered that
question so we'll just move on to trax's
next question

here are monastic rules only for
unenlightened men or women if for
example an arant has accepted money and
bought himself or herself a sweatsuit

and a razor and shave his beard himself
or herself yeah she's not going to be
shaving her beard I hope looking
directly into the mirror it would be
breaking of many rules but nothing
morally wrong with it for the Arun
surely well that's it's kind of an
interesting question and it is there if
you read the the origin stories of the
rules of monastic
discipline a few times an Arun has been
the first person to break a
rule um I can't think of which one it
was I think one was like uh saving food
um overnight and eating it the next day
I think there was an arant who was the
first one recorded to break that rule at

least tradition says so because he just wanted to be less of a burden on his supporters you know he'd go for alms round once and his bowl full of food would last him for days days so he just eat a little bit each day but he was told not to do that anymore and the thing is even AR Hans are supposed to follow the rules of monastic discipline um I mean for a monk one of the kinds of morality is patima Samila or the the morality of restrained in accordance with the patim Moka rules or the the rules of monastic discipline so even though he's fully enlightened he's still obligated to follow the rules

even though it's really not necessary
anymore I mean he's he's crossed to the
other Shore you know he's he's laid down
the burden and is freed and so I mean he
doesn't need the
raft anymore so he can kind of dismiss
that but still because he's a member of
the S the S has rules and to just start
breaking those rules in a sense would
sort of like be flirting with dishonesty
or a dishonest
life

so even arant that don't really need to
practice uh for enlightenment anymore
still because they're still monks they
still follow the
rules so I mean there are a lot of rules

that really don't have anything to do
with morality whether you're a monk or
whether you're enlightened or not you
know like eating in the afternoon
there's nothing more moral about eating
in the morning than eating in the
afternoon or shaving your head I mean
it's not immoral to have head hair you
know there's what color of robes are
allowable what materials you know the
way you sew it there's so much of the
viia rules that really have nothing to
do with basic morality it's just like
etiquette or just like ancient Indian
tradition stuff like that
so let's see so the monastic rules are

not only for unenlightened men or women
therefore anyone who's joined the order
voluntarily and has taken upon
themselves these precepts and if you
don't want to follow the precepts
anymore then the honest thing to do is
to drop out which is what I eventually
did so I think I'll just move on to the
next question also from traex is and he
says how exactly did you move all those
books walking on foot from one place to
another in Louisiana or did you have
like half of those books behind your
back then and at first I didn't
understand this question at first I
thought he was talking about Burma like
how did I travel around in Burma with

with so many books because as you can see I do have a bookcase that's more than half full of books and then the Louisiana part it took me a while and then finally I realized he's talking about the one night I or two nights I spent especially the first night I spent in New Orleans it's not pronounced New Orleans mind you everyone there calls it New

Orleans so if you if you go there and call it New Orleans people know you're from out of town and uh I don't know maybe they won't trust you or something

xenophobia so let's see how did I move

all the books walking from one place to another in Louisiana well first of all I sent a few boxes of books by mail to South Carolina before before I got on the train to come to to South Carolina but I did have I mean most of my possessions were books as a monk and so I did have like this big clunky Foot Locker it was like a a Burmese military Foot Locker made out of steel had no wheels or anything no handle even the handle eventually broke off of it so it was really a bastard to get around and I had a suitcase and I also had like this little backpack thing like a napsack that I had stuff stuffed into and uh yeah my first night in New Orleans that

was that was an ordeal I was really thinking that I was going to have to sleep on the street that night um I go to this hotel relatively nice hotel I go to the desk you know I've just I just lugged all my stuff oh wait I I got off the train and took a cab and then the the cabbie just you know left me there so I'm it's hard enough just lugging all of my luggage into the lobby of this hotel and um I had cash and I I was willing to pay with cash and he said I'm sorry we don't accept cash you have to use credit cards I didn't have a credit card I didn't have credit I didn't have any kind of credit rating at all my

credit rating was the empty set it was just

non-existent and so

he said well the the holiday in couple blocks down the road uh will almost certainly take cash so then I'm like trying to carry and drag all this stuff two blocks and I was exhausted just going two blocks in in like the the sweltering

heat and I get there and they didn't take cash either it's it's all credit cards if you don't have a credit card you cannot stay there you can be overflowing with money you know thousands of dollars they won't take the money which was just it's just strange

to me I mean that's what money is for I mean it says right on the back you know for all debts you know legal or I don't remember what it says but I mean you I mean it just seems strange that they would

reject cash when that's what cash is for is to pay for

stuff so anyway I had to make it all the way back I mean I called my sweetheart in desperation in the middle of the night and uh she was able to to somehow get her credit card to to pay for my

room and then I mean they wouldn't let me check in I'm like standing there at

the desk wanting to check in I mean the
the money part was taken care of and
they say no you can't check in here it's
like well I mean do you have any
vacancies and they say yeah we have
vacancies but still you can't check in
here you have to get have you have to
make a reservation so what I had to do I
had to go to sit on a uh like on a couch
30 feet away and on on my computer using
using WiFi I make a reservation then I
get up and go back it was just really
weird but I mean I'm completely
digressing

here so how did I move all those books
yeah I mean it was it was very difficult
and eventually the handle in the Foot

Locker broke and it was just I mean it was like a Herculean labor just getting all my luggage around cuz there was still a lot of books in my luggage but I didn't have this

many but at first I thought CHX is was asking about how I did it as a monk in Burma and my first several years as a monk I had maybe 20 pounds of books and then um somebody donated to me an entire poly to ptica like 40 volumes so I mean there's no way I could carry that around I mean 20 pounds of books you know that's still manageable you can still carry it you know technically you I didn't have as I say I really didn't

have many other possessions besides just
bowls my bowl which I still have and
robes and so forth um but then
eventually I just kind of gave up on the
struggle to keep my books down to a a
manageable amount you know that I could
just carry everything that I own you
know and just take off walking with it
that was the ideal you know that's that
is the ideal for a monk but um I just
gave up in fact in fact um I used to
keep my books at this place in the town
of one dwin I had a supporter there they
had like this extra building like an out
building where I just I would stay there
when I would visit my stuff would be
stored there and in I think it was

around June of

1999 there was a flash flood the dam

broke and this I mean the place where I

kept everything was like six feet

underwater it was it was soaking some of

these books on the bookshelf right back

there soaked in muddy water for like 48

hours they were just completely

submerged and I had to come back um I

mean there's it was just mud everywhere

there's human corpses everywhere before

I got there those got cleaned up but

there were still like dead cows and dead

dogs and stuff lying around there like

700 people died in that flood and I mean

it's like the American media is like

this now but the Burmese media which was
you know controlled by the military
government you know you didn't hear a
word about it you know it was all Word
of Mouth people would just hear about it
from somebody else who heard about it
from somebody else maybe and that's kind
of how you hear the important stuff
nowadays I mean you don't you don't hear
about it on CNN unless it's you know
something that's that's uh you know good
for the Democrats you know then you'll
hear about well good for globalists in
general but anything that's bad for
Democrats you know like corrupt
in uh in the Democratic party or in the
the white house or whatever nothing you

don't hear about that you just hear you
know

51 um authorities declaring that it's
all just Russian disinformation or
whatever but again I'm just digressing
all over the place having a
drink sweet
tea

so so in other words what happened was
the gods are warning me I'm keeping too
many books by sending this flash flood
that kills 700 people and I just kept
collecting books so I was just I was
just a lost cause at that
point so I think I'll just move on next
question here and this is from achala

and this may be some dishonesty on my part because I told achalo that he would be first because he asked the question before I uploaded the last Q&A but it was after I'd already recorded it so I said well you'll be at the top of the list next time and then Traxis comes out and and tells me that um there was one from like two q&as in the past that I hadn't answered so I had to put him at the top and I hope aala will forgive me for breaking my promise I told him he would be at the top of the list he'd be the first question and it didn't happen happen

so I I make public confession and I'll try to do better in

future and breaking promises I mean that it's it's a mild kind of dishonesty for a monk I believe the commentary say it is a doka offense or a minor offense for a monk to break a promise even though I mean there's no deliberate attempt to deceive it's just that you say you're going to do something and then you don't do it so it's it's good to always be careful you know God willing I'll do it you know if Nothing Stops me from doing it I'll do it you know put in some qualifiers so that um if some Act of God prevents you from from keeping your promise then you're sort of flirting with with u

dishonesty so achala

says I see some Buddhist monks

especially from Mahayana trying to speak

up for climate change

seeing it as a threat I am personally

least worried about it trying to fix

samsara or find a perfect happy place in

samsara is just not realistic and not

dhama it's natural for the climate to

change it would go against the nature of

impermanence if the climate doesn't

change the problem is rooted in our

ignorance and not being able to see the

reality as it is

I also believe Buddhist monks should

refrain from engaging in such worldly

matters as usually such things are

politically motivated what's your take
on the matter from a Buddhist
perspective well I don't think it's
necessarily immoral for a monk to be
concerned about climate change and to
share his concerns with people that he
talks to because I mean if he's
motivated by compassion let's say you
know he he believes all the you know the
the
alarmism and he thinks you know if we
don't get down to carbon neutral within
the next you know however many years
we're we're
doomed and that's I mean it's it's not
really true I mean the the climate is

warming to some degree the climate is changing as achala here points out the climate's always changing in fact for most of the history of this planet things have been warmer than now literally we are still in an ice age so long as you've got glaciation you've got glaciers on the surface you got ice caps at all then you're still in a time that could be called an Ice Age we're just sort of in between the big glaciations but still the Earth is cooler now than usual but uh I watch a lot of like Evolution videos about you know the evolution of the jaw moth light media is a really good really good channel for that sort of thing and there have been Mass

die offs over and over again and some of it some of these Mass die offs have been caused by climate change in fact most of them have been if you include volcanoes and Comet impacts and so forth that are causing just immediate radical climate change but sometimes it's just natural changes that are causing the climate to change so that um the the established species that are in like living in various environments they just can't adapt fast enough and they die out

so but I mean if you got a monk or a Buddhist teacher a Buddhist anybody who really is concerned for the welfare of

all beings on this planet and takes it seriously you know he doesn't think that maybe you know the globalist powers that be are just wanting us to be afraid of this because it suits their purposes you know I mean there are things more dangerous than climate change I guarantee it I mean nukes still exist in fact there's more countries now that have nukes than back in the 80s when everyone was saying you know nuclear winter we're all [__] you know it's all it's if if we don't get rid of nukes we're all done for um AI the technological singularity that potentially is more dangerous and uh there's less we can do about it it's

going to be instantaneous when it happens or within a very short time unlike climate change people are very adaptable

so yeah

it's if it's politically motivated I mean on if the the person who's talking about it is himself politically motivated then maybe I mean you're getting into you know borderline inappropriate

speech but if he's just sincerely you know to the best of his understanding trying to uh you know prevent Drought on a huge scale on this planet then yeah I think I think he'd be still be doing

okay with regard to DH even if he's
misguided or you know just naïve and
believing the you know the the official
narrative which is pretty much
manipulated by the glob powers to be I
mean a scientist can be bought as easily
as a a judge or a
politician and even without buying
scientists it's the scientists who agree
with the narrative that are getting the
funding anyone who goes against the
narrative he can lose his job
so we don't need to get into that I'm I
maybe I should a maybe I should
apologize because I'm I'm answering
these questions um about 10% of the
actual words that are coming out out of

my mouth are directly answering the questions and I'm just digressing all over the place so I'll just move on next question and this is from Fred and Fred says did you shave your eyebrows in Myanmar like Tha monks and no I did not um it's shaving the eyebrows is predominantly a tie thing it's a tie cultural thing the vinia says a monk has to shave his his head hair and his facial hair um doesn't mention anything about eyebrows specifically but the ties shave their eyebrows they don't they don't clip off their their eyelashes though so they're

still not 100% but I think I answered this a question along these lines not long ago um that it it was started off I heard this story it's like a legend Like An Origin myth or something of why Thai monk shaved their eyebrows and it was Burma or Myanmar and Thailand were traditional Arch enemies you know they were like Sparta and Athens or England and France you know they were just like the traditional favorite enemies of each other and so they would send spies across the border disguised as monks to you know spy out the land and find out what's going on and all that and so the ties started shaving their eyebrows so they would be able to tell the

difference between their real monks and the fake Burmese spy monks so then of course the Burmese spies would start shaving their eyebrows too so they'd blend in but then the spies on the other side of the Border in Burma would see the the Spy monks when they when they would come back you know they'd see a a shaven headed guy with no eyebrows they'd know he was a spy unless maybe he was just a renegade tie just who decided to defect to Burma or something

so yeah only time monks shave their eyebrows even a few of those are getting to the point where they don't do

especially like the Western monks some
of the an cha monks who live in the
west they don't bother shaving their
eyebrows it's really it's really
unnecessary so I'll just move on to the
next question this is from Francois Alias
Francoise and France flaw
says long time ago I had a graduate
course on Indian in Buddhism with one of
the main translator of the Dal Lama
while studying early Mahayana Buddhist
texts not Nagarjuna more like Vasubandhu if
I recall correctly we found out that in
some texts the notion of anatman had
actually almost the same meaning as
Atman ultimate nature of reality
Universal Universal Panacea Etc which

was quite funny anata is so
counterintuitive so reification is
always very
tempting aha do you think nagar's
interpretation of anata or emptiness
fits with what is found in the poly
Canon my knowledge of nagara is quite
limited but it seems to me an acceptable
stretch thoughts so I've decided that if
I discuss maamaa because it is so
profound that it would Aid my ability to
answer if I
the The Fez so let's see
here
okay so there's actually two kinds of
questions in here that I'd like to

address here one is um we found out that in some texts the the notion anatman had actually almost the same meaning as Atman and yeah I mean I've discussed this a lot this is like one of the recurring themes of my q&as in and of some of my writing is that everything and nothing you know it's like the beginning of of hegel's dialectic in his logic he starts off with pure being and then he points out that pure being and its antithesis pure nonbeing are just interchangeable they're indistinguishable neither one of them has any discernable content because both are just absolute without any boundaries without any differences

and so if you take that to Atman as
absolute you know like like the upan
aoic idea of you know Atman is God you
know it's Brahman it's Ultimate Reality
then again you know the everything and
the nothing they just merge into
one so yeah I mean um a kind of
Universalist

Aton would be very similar I mean to the
extent that you're not reifying it as a
as as a this you know as as a thing then
to the extent that you're not reifying
it then it just Blends in with you know
like the absolute and and nothing just
they they become
indistinguishable so it is it is

counterintuitive it's

paradoxical um and I've tried to explain

it many times but it's some things you

just can't explain in a reasonable way

and I do hope that the top of my Fez

isn't being completely cut off here you

i' got to do

this

so just a Tas a little

bit so that there is that that when

you're dealing with the absolute that's

anything that's infinite and formless

it's going to be paradoxical and it's

going to transcend The Duality of is and

isn't and to some degree even The

Duality of Atman and

anatman which I mean you just can't wrap

your head around it you cannot

understand reality

intellectually the intellect cannot deal

with infinity for example formless

Infinity the intellect cannot deal with

it it can't grasp

it

so that would be my answer to that but

then the the main question here is do

you think nagar's interpretation of

anata or emptiness fits with what is

found in the polyan Canon okay so and I

might as well add here he says my

knowledge of nagara is quite limited but

it seems to me an acceptable stretch he

has it quotes there and then he ask for

my thoughts and I think nagara did
succeed in giving a kind of
philosophical like framework not even a
framework like a
philosophical EXP explanation of the
teachings of the ATA waga of the sutan
where they're saying don't believe
anything have no views you know it's
just it's not really skepticism it's
it's like radical mysticism where I mean
you can know the truth unlike the
Skeptics who say you can't know the
truth a Mystic says you can know the
truth but you're can't know the truth
intellectually so you've got to dismiss
the intellect you've got to dismiss
percept

and then the truth is there the truth is
always there reality is always right
here we're soaking in it and nagarjuna is
the one who was able to come up with
maybe by that time by the time of
nagarjuna there was enough sophistication
in philosophy and logic that you could
actually build up a philosophy that
could account for these very cryptic
sometimes paradoxical statements in the
AA

it's it's sort of Zen likee some
Scholars have called Thea waga Proto
maamaa

so I think nagar was able I mean he was
one of the most successful thinkers or

Mystics who was able to
explain why the Tika waga says what it
says about how a monk should have no
view no perception no belief
so I do think that nagar in his mulaka
Kara for example did a very good job
of like explaining that and justifying
that philosophically and it wasn't
skepticism like um what was his name
sexus
empiricus if you're not familiar with
with Western philosophy you might not
know who I'm talking about but he was he
was uh um like a a classical
skeptic in that lived in uh Ancient Rome
or the ancient Roman
state

so yeah I think I answered that question
I can take the Fez off
now it is a nice Fez though I mean
anyone who's who's considering getting a
fez Fez orama makes really good fezzes I
just I'm really happy with this
Fez and there's a wide variety of
different kinds of Tassels too
high quality stuff so I'll just move on
to the next question here and this is
from kazen I
think
kzen maybe it's kzen but looks like
kazen so some space alien
name and kazen says curious if there
were lots of burmes lay people with high

attainments well I mean there's really not lots of even monks with high Attain
Ain Ms seems to me and they're always going to be relatively rare they're always going to form a tiny minority seems to

me um I mean you can read in the past of how there were lots and lots of people with high attainments but um it's kind of questionable like

um I read the like the poems of Han Shan and Han Shan was like this Zen figure in Chinese Buddhism who was supposed be really Advanced I mean he was supposed to be like this enlightened you know zen master or something but you read his poems and there's a lot of like

complaining and I mean he doesn't really
I mean he he praises the the like the
holy life and you know he has wise poems
but some of the poems you you see that
he was sort of on the wrong side of a
civil war he was you know he had to just
flee and hide out in the woods and he
adopted that life largely of necessity
he would have preferred to be some
Aristocrat you know that was in power
with lots of money and so forth and so I
mean you can it helps you to understand
how you get all these Legends of all
these Super Wise Advanced beings in the
past you know where it's no longer
verifiable you know I assume that the

Buddha himself had quite a few like
really Advanced
disciples and there have been certain
like resurgences of dhama like including
like medieval Chinese Zen where I mean I
wouldn't be at all surprised if
there really were lots of monks with
high attainments and also lots of lay
people

too um but I mean there there it's
always going to be a minority even then
like all of the Buddhist disciples were
not

enlightened so I mean there's one really
famous Burmese Lake person with high
attainments ubah kin who was goenka's
teacher SN goena he was a lay person I

don't know how high his attainments were but his own teacher was a kind of bureaucrat in the Burmese government um back before it was a military dictatorship and uh you know he was like a meditation master and he was a lay person um a lot of Burmese lay people they're good at meditating just because they're not compulsive thinkers like us um but it's like their approach to Buddhism is very Faith oriented and if you're familiar with terava Buddhist philosophy there are like the five faculties the five indas and one of them is PA which in this case doesn't so much mean wisdom it just means like

cleverness or like quickness of Mind
Readiness of wit and then that is
supposed to be balanced out with another
one with Sada or faith and if you have
too much too much PA and not enough Sada
you're not going to believe anything you
know the wisi Maga says you're going to
be like a person whose sickness is
caused by the medicine he takes but if
you have too much Sada and not enough PA
then you can believe anything if You'
got too much faith and not enough
critical thinking then you can believe
anything no matter how ridiculous it is
and there's a lot of that going on
nowadays I mean it's always gone on
because we're just human All Too

Human but if you have too much of this cleverness then you're just going to be like a skeptic you're going to demand more in more data or whatever before you make your decision or whatever and you're going to wind up not believing anything you just get over analysis paralysis or

whatever so um they're probably more Burmese lay people with high attainments than American lay people with high attainments just because they live a simple life they believe dhama without question you know it's it's large Faith but still it's it strengthens them in their practice in their motivation to

practice and um I mean some of the most
virtuous good people I've ever known
lived in burmes
villages so they were good people they
weren't necessarily enlightened
sages but they were definitely they
might be what's called like a Chula
stapana where they're not technically a
soda Pao but they're they're so rooted
in living a virtuous life that you know
they're pretty much guaranteed of moving
upwards or you know you know they're
moving in the right
direction so I guess I'll just move on
to next question
here this is from hery gerdy man
and herur man

says if non-existence is an aspect of
samsara simply the opposite of existence
does not existence create Karma or does
does non-existence create Karma okay so
that's a question does non-existence
create Karma

and there are sutas like the kalaha Su
of the ATA waga of the
sutata which says that existence and
non-existence are derived from
ultimately from perception so that you
know it's like a duality existence and
non-existence they're both perceptions
and they rely upon each other you know
they kind of dependently
coise um so that's the kind of thing

that uh is really an aspect of samsara if
something really doesn't exist um in
like an

objective or Beyond objective just in
reality then that wouldn't create Karma
but still trying to reify all that
you're turning it into a something and
that creates

Karma so the idea of non-existence
creates

Karma I guess that would be the simplest
way of explaining it and there's a
similar question to this a little
further down that I may uh enlarge upon
but yeah non-existence creates Karma to
the extent that in order for this
non-existence to exist you have to have

a concept or an idea or a perception of non-existence and that is volitional and it's creating

Karma so let just move on to the next question this from sharp

Rock and sharp Rock says if one is having trouble with sensual desire while meditating in a beautiful setting would you recommend creating a duller environment more like a sensory deprivation chamber to eliminate stimuli or should I keep meditating on that beautiful setting and work on cultivating mindfulness of the sensual desire well I mean if you read the the poly texts it's it says none of the

above I mean some of the some of the
poly tex say that you should seek out
like what is repulsive you know you
should go and contemplate rotting
corpses for example I mean that was
relatively common practice in the
Buddhist time it's hard to find rotting
corpses nowadays
unless she might live near a battlefield
or something but
um so I mean that would be that would be
like ideal from the ancient Indian
hardcore aesthetic point of view is um
if you're having trouble with sensual
desire while meditating a beautiful
setting find a non- beautiful setting
like like something ugly you know like

in the rahula sutta which is in the
sutanta um there's rahula suya I'm
referring to the one in the
suanta this the Buddha advises presumably
his own son who had ordained by that
time um you know avoid anything
beautiful and associated with passion
and seek out what is
revolting so I mean that's that's one
thing but then you might have
to like gear your meditation towards
contemplation of repulsiveness or so
forth but if you just want to meditate
on your breath
then yeah I mean if if you're having
trouble with uh sensual desire while

meditating in a beautiful setting then
yeah just go the Zen route or keep your
eyes closed you know just sit in a blank
room just stare at a blank wall keep
your eyes closed where it's just
black and that should

help so yeah I mean it's it's becoming
sort of contri you know you're playing
with fire when you keep meditating in
the beautiful setting that is
distracting you and work on cultivating
mindfulness of the sensual desire I mean
that's it's it's possible you know it's
sort of like the tantric path the
left-handed path because most people
fail at that it's more dangerous it's
maybe more suited to the kuga to the

spiritual Dark Age that allegedly we are
in right now but uh you'd have to have a
good teacher I think to help guide you
through that sort of thing so I'll just
move on to the next question this is

from catchup

and ketchup

says what if someone was being harmed
into breaking a precept what should they
do and I asked catchup what does he mean
by that I don't I don't really

understand what it means by if someone
is harmed into breaking a precept then
um this was in the a YouTube comment and
then below that there was a reply by
trax's and trax's add added that maybe

it is about a monk being raped by a male prostitute so it's hard for me to answer this question mainly because I don't really understand what it means to be harmed into breaking a precept um you know if you're being forced into something let's say somebody's being raped then I mean so long as you're you're not volitionally doing it so long as you're not consenting then you're you're not doing anything wrong like with regard to um a monk who who gets raped raped let's let's say he's raped by a woman cuz this this used to actually happen like in in Burma under the military dictatorship some monks would be troublemakers you

know they'd be protesting against the government and so forth and so you can't just defrock a monk nobody has the authority to defrock a monk except for that monk

himself and he can be like admonished and even sort of put on a kind of probation he can be given the silent treatment other monks can avoid him in All That but nobody has the authority to just make him not be a monk anymore other than himself unless he commits a par offense so what the military government would do is you got this monk in this prison cell and they would just hire a prostitute to like entice him you

know lure him you know get him excited
or whatever and so long as his his penis
you know enters into any of her three
orifices the three main ones I should
say uh to the to the extent of the width
of a sesame seed he's not a monk anymore
if he consents to it and that's you know
that's pretty much what it is it's like
in the in the texts like in the winia
rules it says you know if you consent
while inserting it that's it you're
excommunicated if you don't consent
while inserting it but you consent you
know while it's in there then then also
you're excommunicated and if you don't
consent while inserting it and you don't
consent while it's in there but you do

consent while you're pulling it out then you're excommunicated so I mean if it's not volitional on your part then you're not really doing anything wrong I mean what should the person do if they're being forced into doing bad things um I mean if if they have no choice you know they're just being forced like being raped for example um I mean really they're not doing anything wrong other than just their mental states that are going on and so they should really try to be as mindful you know try not to be wallowing in in fear or Terror or rage or anything like that because then you're making

then you're making

Karma Bad

Karma being harmed into breaking a precept is if it's just like peer group pressure you know you're just being pressured into breaking a rule you know it's like your parents are insisting that you do something that you think is like join the Army or something that you consider to be morally indefensible then I mean you just have to like stand by your morals you have to stand by your conscience and defy even your own parents if necessary so again I'm really not sure what ketchup had in mind by this question of of what if someone was being

harmful into breaking a precept but I mean if it's not volitional at all then I mean you're not really doing anything because the doing is the volition you know it's the mental state accompanying the action but uh if someone is just pressuring you I mean if even if it's a gunpoint you know they're saying you know kill this other person or I kill you you still have the choice to just refuse and take the bullet which would be the dharmically correct thing to

do so I guess I'll just move on to the next question this is from ludis balam and ludus balam says in the

procrit language and I I think he mainly means Nepali language is there separate concept for ghost or would ghosts be considered Davis second part is Dava the word they use in poly or is there another term well um in po the word for a god a small G God below the level of a Brahma um yeah that would be daa DEA but there definitely is a different word for ghosts than for for Davis the word for ghosts in ply the usual word is p and I think I've explained before that P is derived from the same word as father you know in um in in po it's p p is his father uh which goes back into Proto indoeuropean and the the English word father is derived from the same

root as the poly word petar
just but the Germanic languages which
includes English P turns to the F
sound so um and and the reason why
ghosts have a name that's derived from
the word father is because they were the
original um concept of the petas were
ancestors it was ancestor worship and
there's still some of that going on in
India today where you have to make
offerings to your an ancestors and if
you don't make offerings to them they
become miserable and hungry and so forth
and that's where the idea of hungry
ghosts comes from that's why ghosts in
are are called Hungry ghosts in in

Buddhism because those are the ancestors or originally the meaning was those are the ancestors that didn't get offerings from their

descendants and so they're in a state of you know distress hunger or whatever but then later on um in Buddhist cosmology the petas were considered to be hungry just just because they would uh have like a pinhole sized mouth and a huge stomach or a huge mouth and a like a pin pin head sized stomach and it was just a kind of punishment because the p live in one of the lower Realms you got four lower Realms you got hell you got ghosts you got animals and you got the asuras which um are kind of awkward they

don't they're not mentioned a lot or at least they're not mentioned as many times as the other three in in the poly texts so there's ghosts are considered to be a subhuman level on on the 31 planes of existence whereas Davis are superhuman level but if you read the texts it's a spectrum like the highest ghost is right up against the same level as the lowest daa and if you read a strange text called the the pwu or the ghost stories it's actually canonical or at least yeah the book itself is canonical although most of the stories are in the commentary and um you see that these

ghost stories are mainly about a ghost that's almost a God you know it's it's it's essentially lives the life of a God but it has something wrong it's got like stinking bad breath or it has to be naked all the time or one story that I told it's one of my favorite ghost stories in in the poly text is there was this woman a female goddess essentially who every night she' go into this trance and descend from her her mansion and a black dog would devour her just eat all the meat off of her bones the bones would fall into this Lotus pool and then it her the flesh would grow back she'd climb out of the pool and go back up into her bedroom and go back to sleep

and then that would recur every
night but aside aside from aside from
being eaten by a dog every night I mean
she lived in this beautiful palace you
know she had this lifespan of thousands
of years she had these Celestial
attendants you know Celestial servants
and so forth surrounded by these
beautiful parks of of you know Celestial
trees and all
this

so um yeah so so it's it's a Continuum
it's like a spectrum and the dvas are
like the subhuman part and the the or no
the the petas or ghosts or the subhuman
part and the Davis are the Superhuman

you know it's

just so yeah and again I'm I'm I'm being
very verbose today taking a long time to
answer these questions but um I'll just
move on to ludus balam's next

question and he says would birth

contraceptives like condoms birth

control pills or birth control implants

have a similar karmic status to eating

meat considering most men and women

don't approach it with the mindset that

they are killing a person especially

considering the implant which happens

before

pregnancy yeah or the or the condom for

that

matter so in a way yeah I never really

thought about it like that but yeah it's in a way it's similar although I mean technically the karma would be different because you've got this just like the eating food Karma compared with having sex Karma and eating food is generally considered to be karmically neutral although um I mean just having Greed for the food you know just even putting salt and pepper on it to make it taste better would technically be slightly immoral from a Buddhist point of view whereas sex you're getting into the more gross forms of craving and desire and passion and so forth but um yeah technically like using a condom

you're not

killing um even a fertilized egg you're

just preventing the egg from being

fertilized so it' be sort of like

masturbation almost with regard to that

with regard to

reproduction you know you just you might

as well be shooting

blanks

so yeah I mean it's it's not wearing a

condom that is immoral or using a birth

control pill or using an IUD I mean

those themselves are not immoral but the

the sex that you're having you know

after you you use these then usually in

in Buddhist philosophy terot Buddhist

philosophy sex is so prone to desire

it's so closely linked with desire
usually so motivated by desire and
craving and
passion that you know it's really
difficult to do it in a way that is
not immoral even even between a husband
and wife just for the sake of having
kids still to do it perfectly morally
would be really an
accomplishment which is one reason why
Buddhism emphasizes renunciation and
celibacy but it does not I mean it does
not promote vegetarianism
so I'll just move on the next question
here this is from cak and sead zida and
seak andad zida says the Buddha

recommends going to a forest but the vinea also says that a monk is not allowed to stay in the wilderness can you explain the difference cuz I thought Wilderness is anywhere where people don't live which would include forests I have no idea how he got this information I mean it does not say in vinia that a monk can't live in a wilderness it does say a few things one nuns like beunis are not allowed to live in a Wilderness just for their own safety also a monk can't live in a Wilderness during the three months of the rains Retreat the three months of the monsoon usually the first three months um he he's not supposed to live

in a forest um I mean like under a tree
he has to have a roof when he's when
he's during the rains

Retreat um also I mean it's just a
matter of practicality that a monk can't
live more than an easy walk or a
difficult walk every morning to a
village for alms

because he can't store his own food he
can't collect his own food he's got to
be given

food by a lay person so he has to be he
has to have an alms Resort within
walking distance so he can't live you
know 20 miles out in
solitude um in in this deep Wilderness

because he wouldn't be able to get food
that way I have been told that there
have been some Wise Guy monks that
trained monkeys to offer them food so
they could live out there in the
wilderness by themselves and the monkey
would offer them food but um that's
that's kind of a rare thing I
think so yeah I mean monks are
encouraged to live in forests
um wild

places so I don't I don't know what he
had in mind with his idea that the vinea
says that a monk is not allowed to stay
in a Wilderness unless it's just under
certain circumstances like during I mean
he's not allowed to live under a tree

during the the three months of the the
Reigns Retreat and so forth or maybe he
confused it with beunis or something so
I'll just move on to cak and sead Z's
next

question and he says I remember reading
a story of the Buddha letting a monk
bring in his blind homeless parents into
the monastery and let them eat alms food
there's also another example of a monk
who gave up the robe to look after their
sick mother or something and made
Pottery for a living wouldn't these also
show that there is more Nuance when it
comes to practicing above all else or
maybe they see taking care of parents as

much more important than being told to
look after your kid while you're in deep
sod

LOL well it is true that the the
Buddhist text put a lot more emphasis on
your obligations to your parents than
your obligations to your spouse or your
own

children that there is a a sua where the
Buddha is saying that you could carry
your parents around on your back for the
rest of your life and you still wouldn't
pay them back for all they've done for
you so honoring your own parents is
important there's even a venea rule
saying that a monk is not supposed to be
ordained you know a a prospective monk

is not supposed to be ordained without
his parents

permission I mean you don't have to have
your wife's permission or your kids

permission you do have to or supposedly
you do have to have your parents'

permission although if you don't get

your parents permission you're ordained

anyway the ordination is still valid but

the monks who perform the ordination

have committed a minor offense requiring

confession so taking care of your aging

parents if you can do that and practice

as a monk anyway like I was saying um in

I think it was the previous Q&A then

that's that's fine there's nothing

against that um and there really is a lot of emphasis on your duties to your own

parents in in the in the poly

texts so parents are considered to be very important almost

sacred in uh in poly so or in the poly text

so yeah I think there would be more of an emphasis on taking care of your aging parents than taking care of your your wife and

children

so I think I should just uh I don't know if I answered that

question um see I guess the question is wouldn't these also show that there's

more Nuance when it comes to practicing
above all else um yeah especially with
regard to parents I suppose
so I'll just move on to next question
this is from nmit and nmit says can a
householder be an arant and
personally I think yes although the
official Orthodox answer is no at least
he couldn't be an arant for more than
about one
day because it is the official position
of terava Buddhism that if you become
fully enlightened you've got a very
short time approximately 24 hours to get
yourself ordained or you are going to
die like um one famous example is uh in

the bahuta of the udana I think it's
udana 110 where there's a non- Buddhist
philosopher named bahah literally means
Outsider who goes to the Buddha and and
he's so receptive to what the Buddha has
to say the Buddha just gives him this
this short little discourse which is
very cryptic and zen-like by the way and
it causes bajia to become enlightened
but because he is not a monk an ordained
monk shortly afterwards he gets killed
by by getting like it was like it like a
calf you know it was a young a young cow
I think like attacks him like butts into
him and hits some vital organ or
something maybe I mean he it just kills
him just by by like running into him and

trampling him or something and if you
read the commentaries um you know
there's there's all this karmic stuff
that that that cow had in a previous
life and this prostitute that bahah was
he was a young man in a different life
who raped her to death or something and
so it would cause like this karmic
vicious circle of her wanting Revenge
Life After Life but again I'm digressing
can a householder be an Aran it's such a
short question you'd think that I'd be
able to give it like a short concise
answer wouldn't
you um yeah I personally think that an
Aran can be a householder I do not think

that you have to be an ordained monk to
be fully enlightened I don't even think
you have to be a terava Buddhist to be
fully in lined which is also unorthodox
because if you're not a terab Buddhist
you have wrong view you have MAA

DTI so so if you want the official
answer then it's no but if you want my
personal belief or opinion then it would
be

yes take your pick and I'll move on to
nm's next question which is what is
aestheticism according to
you and I think the easiest answer to
that would be

asceticism is being okay with being
uncomfortable however I think I could

tweak that explain I could tweak that
answer a because let's say you've got
some rich person living in a mansion
he's got a herum of slave girls he eats
Deluxe gourmet food all the time you
know he never he he rarely feels
uncomfortable you know so he's okay with
it he's okay with being uncomfortable if
it happens but it just doesn't happen
much then he might not be considered all
that much of an athletic so it may be
that aestheticism is like C cultivating
yourself so that you are okay with being
uncomfortable you don't have to torture
yourself that's that's non- Buddhist
that's one of the extremes that a a good

Buddhist is supposed to avoid when he follows the middle path but um I mean you're not supposed to just wallow in sensuality either so asceticism is to some degree avoiding Comfort maybe I could say and definitely it's like cultivating the ability to accept discomfort with equanimity discomfort or even pain so I guess that's my answer so I'll just move on to nut's next question which is why is sense restraint so important in most spiritual practices which is uh that's a good question and it's kind of a deep question and it may be that different spiritual practices will have different

reasons you know like a Christian might
have a different reason
than a Buddhist in in some cases
although I think like a good Catholic
saint back in the Middle Ages would say
sense restraint is important because you
have to mortify your self- willlll and
when you mortify your self- willlll
sufficiently you just kind of kill your
own self-will you know your own free
will or whatever and then you become
like a puppet of God you just do the the
will of God you know God just guides you
to do what pleases him and it's that's
sort of a Christian way of explaining
that sort of the Buddhist approach you

sense

restraint

um I think I mean there's different levels of self-restraint one is just through morality you know you're not going to orgies for example that would be a kind of sense restraint um not going to mosh pits at punk rock concerts um but then I mean the real sense restraint is internal it's mental where um like if you hear a sound you just hear it as sound you're not interpreting that sound as oh that's that song that I like or will will the goddamn dog never stop barking you know when you start spinning off into these thoughts that's not self uh sense

restraint but when you hear the sound
only as like sensory stimuli just as
sound itself or if you see a form just
as you know just seeing when you hear is
just hearing when you taste is just
tasting um then that would be sensor
strain because you're not just spinning
off into all the samsaric thinking
because when you're at the level of just
the bare sensation or as close to the
level of bare sensation as you can get
you're closer to Ultimate Reality
especially from the Orthodox Buddhist
point of view if like in Abid dama you
know take it or leave it but Abid dama
says that sensation waya or feeling is

ultimately real that is an Ultimate
Reality barking dog is not an Ultimate
Reality the song that I like is not
Ultimate Reality but the sound is
ultimately real from a Orthodox terab
Buddhist point of view so if you are
just at the level of the you know seeing
is only seeing hearing is only hearing
you know touching is only touching
you're not interpreting that with with
perceptual commentary and so forth then
you're at the level of Ultimate
Reality at least you're closer to
Ultimate Reality I mean you're moving
closer to
Enlightenment by just being like the
stripped down almost mystical state of

in the scene there's only the scene in
the her there's only the heard and the
felt there's only the
felt so the cultivation of that is is
getting you much closer to
Enlightenment because I mean it's you're
training yourself away from all this
some SAR perceptual gobbly go that your
mind is just generating pretty much
constantly even in your
sleep so I'll just move on to the next
question I'm not sure how effectively I
answered that question but I I I gave it
a shot so I'll just move on to ru's
question here and ru says hello poo what
is your view of Mantra do you think

Mantra practice as worthy to Incline the
Mind towards dhama I suppose one could
concoct mantras out of the poly Canon
question mark um I use Mantra sometimes
um like i' I've said before i i m
spontaneously like m is the main Mantra
that I've used there have been times in
my life I've used other mantras that
also just arose spontaneously like dear
God please have mercy you know even
though I'm not a theist it just arose
maybe uh due to momentum karmic momentum
from a past life as a Christian or
something but I have found that Mantra I
mean it can be as effective as
meditation on the breath I mean you can
combine the two like M just every out

breath if you're in sitting in
meditation is an M or if you're walking
you know every out breath is an and uh
it requires a certain effort to keep it
on the Mantra which makes it better than
in in one way than breath meditation
because in breath meditation your mind
can just wander away from the breathing
because you know you're going to breathe
whether you're mindful of it or not but
the Mantra requires an effort for you to
keep doing it which makes it easier to
keep your mind from wandering away from
it so that's one of the main advantages
of Mantra but you'd want a mantra that
isn't super super

meaningful this om is really good for me
um om money pme hum I suppose would be
more Buddhist although that's Mahayana
Buddhist um but the longer and more
complicated the Mantra is the more
thinking mind is going on and the less
deep your meditation is going to be
because most meditation according to the
wiui Maga again take it or leave it but
according to the Wii manga any kind of
meditation that involves thinking you're
never going to get John with that like
like the meditation on reflection on the
the virtues of the Buddha that's that's
a main one that's it's a kind of Mantra
meditation that a lot of um Burmese
people will do um is

UMO etc etc you know they'll they'll go
like one they'll use a Rosary in just
one bead every time they do that and um
it's not going to be very deep
meditation but if you're not if you're
like a beginner in meditation you're not
very good at meditation
or your mind just gets really restless
sometimes so you need some kind of
mental busy work to keep your mind on
dharma or you know like at least sort of
Elementary meditation then it can still
be useful but I think the Mantra should
be as simple as
possible like like oh works for me a lot
of a lot of the Thai monks especially use

budo although they PR the ties I think
they pronounce it Boe or putto

I I knew this one guy he had he' been
meditating in Thailand and he actually
got aachara samadi he he started seeing
namita from from meditating he thought
he was doing boot toe he I mean he
didn't even know what it meant he didn't
realize that he was saying Buddha in in
like a Thai

accent but he he got to aachara samadi
with it anyway he was seeing the nitas
and
stuff

um so yeah the content of the the ra
yeah you want it simple but it is it is
useful I think that it can be more

effective than breath meditation for some people although breath meditation may be more effective than mantra for some people and breath meditation is much more Orthodox I think just Mantra meditation as Mantra it really isn't endorsed in Orthodox Tibetan Buddhism like in the texts I mean you've got the ones where you're thinking about stuff that could be a kind of Mantra also some traditions in in Burma will use the 32 parts of the body you know head hair body hair nails teeth skin um Etc as as a kind of Mantra where they're not even imagining the location or the the appearance of the the body

parts you know it's just kind of a
mantra that they they do so you can you
can turn some Orthodox Buddhist
meditations into a kind of Mantra medit
ation but um I do think that Mantra can
be useful for a lot of people so Longs
especially if it's

simple so I'll just move on to the next
question here this is from edel Vice

Voyager edel Vice

Voyager and uh Ed iice Voyager says are
C are caves spiritually significant in
your opinion I recall you saying that
you spent most of your time in Burma
hanging out in caves also Muhammad was
spoken to by a kako Dion in a cave and
my Greek is pretty rudimentary but I'm

pretty sure that kako Dion means evil
spirit oh my golly I just got warned
that just a

second oh

boy let's see

here I keep doing this

I keep forgetting to plug in the
computer and then I get this warning
that I'm down to

3% there my computer is no longer
gasping for

air

9% so getting back to Ed Vice voyagers
question

here um yeah I think it's kind of a a
little bit of a dig there to say that

the Archangel Gabriel is an evil
spirit or whoever was
masquerading pretending to be the
Archangel

Gabriel or or

whatever but the main question oh I I
should make one little correction here
edise Voyager says I recall you saying
that you spent most of your time in
Burma hanging out in caves actually it
was maybe a little more than half my
time so I guess that would count as as
most I spent maybe 13 or 14 years
literally living in
caves but um the question here is are
caves spiritually significant and I
don't think that just a cave in and of

itself is spiritually significant it's just a cave um I mean there are advantages to living in caves like for example if you're living in the tropics during the day time in the Blazing heat a cave could be 20° fah at least cooler than the outside air like the main cave that I lived in ironically the one place I've lived longer than anywhere else in my life was a cave at one boo Wildlife Refuge Monastery one boo Bame dojon and the inside of that cave was just all year round around 83 84 degrees Fahrenheit and that's just sort of like

the average temperature of the entire area if you combine you know night and day and cold season and hot season everything you just take the temperature of that place just the the mean temperature over the entire course of the year day and night all the seasons everything it was around 83 84 degrees and it was it went like 50 feet into the into the side of a hill so it was like a constant 83 84 degrees if I had the the door

closed but so I mean that was way better than 100 15 or 120 outside during the hot

season so I mean that's useful I mean it's better for Solitude especially if

you got a door on the cave that you can
latch from the inside to keep out bats
rats humans and
snakes um but I mean in and of
themselves caves are not spiritually
significant I mean any more significant
than any other rock formation it's just
a it's just a hole in the side of a
hill so I think I'll just move the next
question here and this is from Saint
sword or Saints word it's Saint and then
s which could be Saints and then word or
it could be Saint and then
sword I'm guessing it's Saint
sword so Saint sword or Saint's word
says U and I think this isn't even a

question but it's it's it's in
the it's in the comments below a Q&A
video and it's worthy of some comment so
I'm going to I'm just going to read
anyway even though I don't think there's
a single question mark in this entire
thing St sword says formless nothingness
is still an object of Consciousness
albeit very subtle that's what the arupa
janas or a 20 milligram dose of 5 meod
dmtr are adite of a Dante takes this to
be the end notices there is still a self
and concludes that there's a subtle self
which they term Consciousness without an
object in the absolute this is exactly
why they're incorrect Consciousness is
still taking a very subtle object it

still has gone through the process of
picha Samu and become nothingness talk
to someone that's recently gone into
this state of consciousness they'll even
tell you that the eye was still there
the eye if they came if they can
remember it's easy to forget when coming
back from this state just know noticing
nothingness nibana is not Consciousness
nor form nor formless it's gone beyond
it's blowing out all of the
Consciousness self or any objects gross
or subtle further it's really important
to distinguish between emptiness and
nothingness nothingness is a subtle
object the empty set is a set of

nothingness it's still a set it just
doesn't have any members emptiness is a
step further it's where there's no set
to even be empty the sixth patriarch of
Zen story demonstrates this really well
the student That was supposed to succeed
the fifth patriarch wrote a poem about
how one should remain pure that's
nothingness nothingness is as pure as
one can get the poor farmer who actually
became the sixth patriarch wrote two
poems about how there is nothing to
become pure there's no place for dust to
land and make impurity that's
emptiness well I would say that uh the
word for zero in Burmese is th which is
the poly word for emptiness or

empty and I mean there's some of this
that I wouldn't entirely agree with
which is why I'm commenting here with
all due respect to Saint sword and his
sword which may be sharp and
pointy

um like formless consciousness there's a
difference between formless
Consciousness and the concept of
formless Consciousness like if you
perceive formless Consciousness that's
not formless Consciousness anymore so if
you make formless Consciousness an
object then it's not form really
formless Consciousness anymore you can
have like as as he points out one of the

formless Jas one of the formless
contemplative States one of the very
Advanced ones is the the uh the the
realm of infinite
nothingness or there's another one the r
infinite Consciousness and I've I've
hypothesized that those are both ways of
describing Enlightenment that became
unorthodox as the philosophy evolved and
so they just got put into this higher
than fourth genre but still below
Enlightenment and sort of
status but the thing is like ADV
viant is I mean if they're saying that
that like the ultimate is formless
Consciousness and there are a few a few
poly texts that imply also that the

ultimate is formless consciousness that
there's a difference

between saying that the ultimate is
formless consciousness and just having
this

idea that just confusing the idea with
the formless Consciousness itself

because I mean the same thing can happen
in in in Orthodox Buddhism you got
nibana I mean nibana is very different
from the concept of nibana I mean nibana
is different from

nibana and so somebody can meditate on
or contemplate nibana but so long as
it's a perceptual object it's not nibana
and the same is true of formless

Consciousness so long as it is a
perceptual object it's not formless

Consciousness

so and then it says here that ADV Vidant
takes this to be the end notices their
is still a self and concludes that

there's a subtle self which they term

Consciousness without an object in the

absolute but really I mean it's not that

you have a self until you reach nana I

mean you have a concept of a self until

you reach neana maybe even after you

become enlightened you could still have

a concept of a self but you just know

that it's just a concept you're not

identifying with it or thinking that

it's

real so it's it's real difficult if
you're trying to to intellectually
understand something I mean you can't
intellectually understand reality
Ultimate Reality it just cannot
work so you can say that so long as if
if formless Consciousness becomes an an
object it's not formless Consciousness
anymore it's it's a perception of
formless

Consciousness so let's see also I I make
a few little quibbles here like um
Emptiness is let's see where where is it
here uh uhuh this is kind of a long one
here nothingness is a see the empty set
is a set of nothingness well I would I

would say that that nothingness would
just be the set of
zero like like in Burmese daa or sun is
the word for zero whereas uh emptiness
would be like the empty set that's why
it's called The Empty set because it's
empty doesn't even have zero in
it

so uh I mean you you can interpret it
differently of course which may be just
as valid or invalid as as my
interpretation so yeah the sixth
patriarch of Zen we didn't even get into
that I was really disillusioned when I I
read um it was uh a translation of the
the Sutra hang who's this supposedly the
six page patriarch and it was giving

evidence that that hu Nang probably
wasn't really the six patriarch but the
real six patriarch had this lineage that
died out and so uh Hing was sort of
retroactively installed as the sixth and
last patriarch of Zen but we can get
into that maybe some other time don't
want to disillusion people too
much

so yeah I mean it's you can say that
emptiness is anything that
is is not

perceived that would be a good way of
describing emptiness because once you
perceive something you got a set and
even if you're perceiving nothingness

that's that's just the set of
zero but um yeah I'm not I'm not trying
to like like pick nits or anything here
I'll just move on to the next question
this is from Su
deep and S deep says there is a common
belief among Buddhists especially
monastics that only an understanding of
dependent origination can lead to
Liberation as far as I know the Buddha
also said that the teaching of dependent
origination is unique to him so I was
surprised when in a past Q&A you said
there might be more Hindu gurus who are
enlightened than terraa monks and then
he's got four questions here one since
most other transition most other

Traditions don't even mention independent origination how do you think they got enlightened do you think they understand the same ideas in a different way I might be wrong but I don't feel other Traditions talk about similar ideas Dua impermanence dependent origination not self well I mean the possibly the backbone of Buddhism at least Terra Buddhism is the four noble truths and the third Noble truth is the truth of cessation which means when clinging ceases Dua ceases you know when when you stop having desires and attachment you stop suffering so I mean if you just go

with that I mean you might have to argue
that You' have to understand in some
intellectual way dependent core rising
in order to stop having desires and I
don't think that that's necessarily the
case I mean you can have like this
intuitive grasp or an
intuitive appreciation
of something along the lines of
dependent origination where you're not
seeing this outer world as ultimately
real and like a Christian a Christian
Saint like St John of the cross for
example would consider this external
world not to be ultimately real but it
would just be like generated by the
power of God or whatever I think I think

Hindus would largely feel that way

also

um let's see

yeah I mean it is true that dependent Co

dependent core

arising or picha samua it is emphasized

very strongly in terada Buddhism but at

the same time it's pretty obvious that

very few terab Buddhists really

understand it it just very quickly

relatively speaking it got aifi into the

12

links you know this causes this this

causes is this it's just like this

linear sequence that monks memorize and

if they want to understand it any better

than just memorizing it they memorize
what the commentary says or they
memorize you know some something in a
suta but the suas is usually is just the
same stock phrases that are
inserted

so yeah I mean dependent origination I
think the Buddha understood it
intuitively

and he he can't really talk about it
much because it's so hard to talk about
I think it wasn't until nagara came
along hundreds of years later that at
least there was like a sophisticated
philosophical way of sort of almost
talking about it but once you try to
turn it into a formula you've lost

it so it could be that you got
enlightened people that just intuitively
understand that this world is not
ultimately real and that it's in a way
We're Dreaming it that it's it's sort of
a creation of all these different not
ultimately real causes that are all
reinforcing each other to make each
other look like they're real when it's
not real and you know the Hindus do have
the idea of Maya except they can't
really explain it intellectually they
refer to what is sort of like dea Leela
it's just sort of the play of the gods
or something creating this this
world um but I think most Buddhist

attempts um really are not much more sophisticated because you know they're just the 12 Nido theories you know aaar and they just memorize this stuff and then they think they understand it when really they don't

so yeah it is true though what what uh sandep says here is true that an understanding of dependent core Rising is is very much emphasized in the texts although it's pretty clear that most monks even monks that were writing texts or composing texts didn't really understand it so it is kind of a a strange situation in fact according to the

legend the Buddha almost became a Hermit
he almost became a pea Buddha and just
was enlightened but just was going to
keep his mouth shut and not even try to
teach dhama because he figured nobody
would understand dependent Co rising and
uh for like Burmese scholar monks to
think they understand it when the Buddha
himself almost was in despair of
teaching dhama because he figured nobody
would understand it whereas you know any
any Burmese monk who's been to a
monastic School thinks he understands it
I mean it's yeah it's it's very naive
and and uh not very well not very well
informed but it is kind of a it is kind

of a like a paradox or an enigma though
because I mean it's something you just
have to kind of grock it's it's more of
an intuitive appreciation than an
intellectual formula that you memorize
and

master so yeah I did not fully answer
that to my own uh satisfaction but it's
when you get into this stuff some of it
is literally impossible to explain
correctly or valid validly because it's
just off the scale anything that you try
and crystallize it down into
intellectual thoughts and words I mean
you've already lost it so I'll just move
on to S Deep's next question here part
two do you agree with the idea that the

Buddha was this supreme and unique spiritual teacher or do you think there have always been beings who were able to become enlightened without the Buddhist teachings it is a common belief among Buddhists that you can't become enlightened without the instructions of a Buddha well if you read some suttas the Buddha is talking about enlightened beings before him and enlightened beings at the same time as him and enlightened beings in the future I think the whole idea that only a Buddha that that is above the level of an ordinary arahant that is omniscient

who has perfected all of the parames all
10 of

them um that only he can become
enlightened without a teacher or a
tradition to follow and I just I am
skeptical of that I have been skeptical
of that for a long time I still think
that for all I know there may have been
more enlightened Hindus than more than
enlightened terraa

Buddhists like if I had to name two
people of the 20th century that I
thought were fully enlightened two of my
best guesses would be Nim Koli Baba and
Ramana Mahari and both of them were
Hindus

so I mean they weren't the same kind of

Hindu definitely just with regard to I
ramanam maharshi was a white Hindu and
nimoli Baba was like a devotee of Hanuman
so he was more into the Vishnu aspect of
of the highest God and just their their
personalities were very different from
each other Raman Maharshi was just
the

Orthodox you no Scandal Saint you know
he just it was saintly in every possible
way that you could think of whereas neim
CI Baba was a
rascal but he would just look right
through you I mean he he would perform
psychic powers um that would just have
people just completely just beyond

astonished in fact sometimes he would do that to open a person up he would like do this miracle you know just tell them exactly what they're thinking or tell them exactly what they were thinking the night before or whatever just to like break down their concept of what is possible so that they're in a state of like existential crisis and then he can just tell them exactly what they need to hear and

Boop but I think again I'm digressing from the question here do I agree that the idea that the Buddha was a supreme and unique spiritual teacher I think that he was a spiritual genius possibly an intellectual genius as well but I do

not think that you have to be an
orthodox Buddhist to become enlightened
and I do think it's possible for some
people who are just ripe to become
enlightened like even terrible lot of
Buddhism accepts that there are Pacha
Buddhas who become enlightened on their
own without

teachers just during a times when there
is no Buddhism in the world when there
is no
dhama

so um yeah I think that to some degree
the terot Buddhist idea that only a
terab Buddhist can become enlightened
and that you know you the the whole idea

of of these Buddhas who are who have
been cultivating the Perfections for
countless eons in order to become a
Buddha who can set the wheel rolling and
so forth I think that's largely
mythology I really do that's that is my
best honest guess as to the state of
enlightened

beings I

guess so let's see did I answer the
question that is the question now did I
answer the question do I agree with the
idea that the Buddha was a supreme and
unique spiritual teacher well I in a way
he was there was no one better than him
because he reached the top I he was
beyond the top he was off the scale so I

mean at at the very best somebody could
tie for first place with him and he was
certainly a unique spiritual teacher I
mean in human

history um but I on the other hand I
also think that there have always been
beings who are able to become
enlightened without the Buddhist
teachings so I I accept

both so I think I'll just move on to uh
the part three of su Deep's question do
you think enlightened beings from other
Traditions also go through the four
stages of Enlightenment early Buddhism
and Terra seems pretty rigid on how
Awakening happens in these stages well

um I've I've talked about the four
stages of Enlightenment also I do think
that that is anachronistic that it it
was a 1 development in Buddhist
philosophy that for example the the
first sutas of the ID Wuda use anagami
as a synonym for arant
sopana probably originally just meant
someone who had just started upon
started firmly upon the path of dhama
you know they would they would be sort
of like the equivalent of a born again
Christian that the earliest text never
even mention um

um

sakagami who who are only going to get
born again one more time before I mean

they don't uh what is it

sakagami yeah they just have one more

Earthly worldly existence before they

become enlightened and also um you don't

necessarily I'm pretty sure even

Orthodox terval says you don't

necessarily go through four stages of

sainthood that you can just go from

putuj unenlightened commoner straight to

fully enlightened I mean there might be

like two moments like in Abid dama you

got path and fruition so like like each

of these four stages of saood like

sodana sakagami anagami and arahant you

know there's like two stages there's the

pth stage and the fruition stage and for

some strange reason the Abid dama
philosophy says that the path stage
lasts just this trith of a
second which I mean is just why even
bother even talking about it like in
other parts of the text it says you know
that there are the eight individuals
worthy of offerings and that's you know
each of the four stages in the path
stage and in the fruition stage so that
makes eight but how are you going to
make offerings to someone in a
trillionth of a second when they're at
the path stage you know it's just abid's
got some weird stuff to it and just
Orthodox
terraa partly as a consequence of this

also just has this stuff that if you're really Faith oriented don't want to take a critical approach to your own religion because that's blasphemous and dangerous and the road to hell and all that then you can just gloss over it and you don't notice it because you don't want to notice it but if you're a critically minded Westerner or anybody capable of applying critical thought to your own religion which does make perfect sense I mean it's a good idea at least from my point of view you don't want to believe what isn't true I mean it depends like a faith oriented person if it works for them then that's good enough you know

they don't want to look at it too closely to see if it's true they just want to know that it's true and that's you know like confirmation bias or whatever that's happens in politics all the Time in the West you know it happens with regard to a lot of things happens with regard to a person's own family you know you just have this bias and you just do not want that bias CH challenged but um the whole four stages of Enlightenment I think was not original to the Buddha and even if it was you don't have to go through the sequential steps I mean you can skip over one step and just go straight to to

arant pretty

sure

so and then there's no other mentions
like in other Traditions um except St
John of the cross I've mentioned this
before that he did have a system that
was sort of weirdly similar to the
Buddhist system of not the four stages
of Enlightenment but the the the stage
of the putuj or the common worldling who
is not a saint at all and then you've
got the the seika the person in training
and from the Orthodox terad point of
view that would be soapas sakagami and
anagami and then you've got the perfect
the perfected oh wait the the AA the one

who was not in training I'm confusing my
Christian with my Buddhism here so
you've got putuj common worlding sea a
saint who's still not fully enlightened
and then the AA one who is no longer in
training because he is fully enlightened
he's an Arun St John of the Cross
possibly with no awareness of what
terraa Buddhism teaches he had the level
of like the the common person the
worldly I can't remember what they were
called uh the beginner I think that's
what they called the beginner then you
have the Adept that's the Adept in
contemplation which would probably be at
least second JRE from a Buddhist point
of view and then you've got the

perfected and that surprised me because
in Christianity I'm pretty sure the the
Orthodox you know the Bible itself says
nobody is worthy you know even Jesus
himself denied being good you know
somebody called him good master or good
teacher or something in in in one one of
the books of the New Testament and he
says why do you call me good there's
none good except God so in that in that
scene Jesus was apparently denying not
only being God but even denying being
good or
perfect but St John on the cross
apparently from his own
experience had this system this very

similar to Tibetan Buddhism I not with
regard to the four stages but with
regard to three stages of common World
common worldling you know the the saint
who is adept but not yet enlightened and
then the enlightened being
so yeah that's for me that's another
little bit of evidence that the four
stages of sainthood are kind of a an
artifact a later development because no
other spiritual system mentions it
although there are kind of similar
approaches so I'll just move on to S
Deep's fourth part of this question or
fourth
question which is do you think the views
one holds or the map one follows has an

influence on how progress on the spiritual path unfolds for them well certainly yeah I mean your beliefs um are going to largely determine your behavior at least with regard to your training you know and your your official beliefs your understanding of the religion you're going to have like subliminal subconscious stuff that's influencing it and just like past Comma just giving you momentum in certain directions but certainly um even though uh so a Catholic Mystic a contemplative like a discal carite like St John on the cross had practices very similar to Buddhism and possibly end

results similar to Buddhism that still I mean you're going to have a different approach you know it's sort of like you can do uh like a mathematics problems with geometry or with algebra and the steps will be very different but you'll arrive at the same place you'll you still come up with the correct answer even though you went to two different approaches I do think to some degree especially intellectually that works I mean still I mean the four noble truths you know you have to you know it's like desire is the cause of suffering and so forth if you don't want suffering you you get rid of the desire and that sort of thing I mean

that's going to be true
regardless but um the different
approaches now different people have
different temperaments different
characters different approaches can work
for them there's not just one only way
that was one of the criticisms I had of
the mahasi method which was and might
still be the most
popular meditation method in
Burma and that is that they just give
you one method and like like upand who
was very Fierce kind of a teacher that
you know if you weren't responding to
this one method you just get scolded you
just get chewed out for it and it was

like a doctor who would give the same medicine to every patient and if the patient didn't get better the patient would get chewed out for not being sick properly it's kind of like that so there's more than one way of practicing dhama more than one approach you know like some people are more heart and feelings and Faith oriented other people are more more head and like philosophy oriented philosophically minded you know religion versus philosophy you know head versus heart so there's going to be different different approaches but they're all heading towards the same goal even though they might Define them differently at first like freedom from

suffering sounds different from freedom
from delusion but they're the same
thing but the the heart oriented person
might be more
motivated by freeing himself from
suffering whereas the more intellectual
philosophical person might be more
motivated to free himself from delusion
but it's the sin
result but if you've got if your
religion is like a Jehovah's Witness or
something that I mean Enlightenment
isn't even a concept it's not even
acknowledged as
possible then that's going to definitely
have like a it's definitely going to be

in most cases an insurmountable
obstacle that if you did make
significant spiritual progress aside
from just really ground level you know
cleaning your life up and becoming more
moral in a worldly sense then I mean
you'd be doing it largely in spite of
the system rather than because of
it so I guess I'll just move on to the
next question here and this is from
Austin and Austin says do you believe
the cheetah is never born and Never Dies
or is this just a sneaky way to slide
the concept of Atman into Buddhism well
by cheetah here I'm referring to mind
and not the the spotted wild cat
although ultimately they have the same

atmology I think no wait no they don't
but cheetah the the the spotted the the
world's fastest running animal is uh I
mean the word does come from
Sanskrit it just means variegated but
again I'm just digressing all over the
place today I could reduce the length of
this video by half and still not get rid
of any of the an the actual answers the
questions so anyway let's see do I
believe that the mind the cheetah is
never born and Never Dies so that'd be
like Consciousness or is this just a
sneaky way to slide the concept of Aman
into Buddhism well again we we we have
the Paradox of the cheetah it it doesn't

really exist until it is perceived and
then it's not cheetah anymore it's the
perception of cheetah because we're just
living in perceptions right now
our understanding of the world is
perceptual so again you can say
that

Consciousness um is never born and Never
Dies but it's I mean you can't say that
it exists or doesn't exist it's we're
still in this this paradoxical state of
anything that is formless and infinite
and thus is never born and never dies I
mean you can't say that it exists or
doesn't

exist that you could you could take
either approach and so like with regard

to nibana it's the same way with nibana
it's like or Ultimate Reality let just
say the absolute I mean you can say it
exists or it doesn't exist but either
way I mean it it's not valid to say that
it exists is invalid to say that it
doesn't exist as invalid say that it
does and doesn't exist as invalid say
that it neither does nor doesn't exist
as invalid

but in order to talk about it you have
to like pick

one and so the Buddhists pretty much
picked isn't and and mostly went with
that whereas for example the vantus
Hindus picked is and went with that and

both have their good points and their bad points but neither one is ultimately valid because you just have to leave all these perceptions and names and Concepts behind in order to really know the truth so

um in know sense like you can say that the cheetah is never born and Never Dies but if you insist upon that you make a big deal of it you you cling to that say only this is true and anything else is wrong then that could very easily just turn into a kind of self viw or you're identifying with with your own cheetah that is eternal and Immortal and all that so

that I mean the these kind of questions

are the most difficult questions to answer and I answer them pretty pretty frequently like in the course of the these q&as you know it's probably a few dozen times I've answered the same kinds of questions in pretty much the same way but I mean it's just invalid I mean any kind of answer isn't going to really hit the nail on the head it's I mean you just cannot understand time reality intellectually by thinking about it it just isn't going to happen because you're just going to be stuck in Concepts and the concept is very different the concept of nibana is very different from actual

nibana or whatever it happens to
be so I'll just move on to Austin's next
question

here and this is a strange one he says
it seems to me early Buddhism truly
embraced hallucinatory experiences as a
genuine and significant source of
knowledge considering that in the
ancient world illnesses and diseases
could lead to hallucinations and
even today conditions like tropical
fever and extreme exhaustion can induce
such phenomena how does Buddhism
distinguish between hallucinations and
authentic experiences especially given
that hallucinatory encounters form a
foundational aspect of the religion

instances of people conversing with with
gods glimpses of past and future
incarnations visions of Heaven and Hell
visions of demons yetis and ghosts as
well as teleportation to other Realms
seem to be present in the polyan Canon
suggesting that Buddhists approach these
experiences with earnestness deeming
them real and pivotal in bolstering
faith within the community every
indication of the poly in the poly Canon
is that the Buddha takes this very
seriously and then he regards these all
As real how does a skeptical Westerner
approach this with serious earnestness
thanks well I mean first of all it seems

to me pretty obvious here that that
Austin is just
assuming that for example people
conversing with gods glimpses of past
and future incarnations visions of
Heaven and Hell visions of demons yetis
and ghosts as well as teleportation to
other Realms that all of that is just
hallucination and of course bud bum does
not accept that as
hallucination Buddhism accepts that as
real as real as anything else as real as
this
beverage and so I mean Austin here just
seems to be assuming with a modern
Western mind that you know what what
science can

explain is not

real and that you know all this like

visions

and conversing with gods and so forth

it's all just

hallucinations but that's not the

Assumption made in the texts it's not

necessarily my assumption unless you

want to assume that even this beverage

is a hallucination and I could go with

that that this world we're we're in a

kind of Matrix we're in a kind of dream

world and none of this is real so you

could say you know the gods that someone

is conversing with aren't real that you

know seeing that Clairvoyant Visions

aren't real but then again the beverage
isn't real

either I'm not real the books aren't
real

so how does a skeptical Westerner
approach this with serious earnestness

I'm not sure how

skeptical uh Austin is

here because I mean if you believe that

it's an illusion that's not skepticism

skepticism is the suspension of judgment

that is skepticism in the classical

sense suspension of judgment if you if

you're like a skeptic nowadays like like

um the the Skeptics of paranormal

activities you know like the amazing

Randy and this group called pyop who

call themselves Skeptics but they firmly believe that psychic powers are [_] and so they're not Skeptics at all I mean they're they're firmly believing something they're just believe firmly believing the opposite of what somebody else believes so I mean if you believe that something is real I mean that's not skepticism if you firmly believe just to the same extent that something isn't real that's not skepticism either that's you're just still believe you're positively believing something you're just believing the opposite of what somebody else is believing or you're believing

the negation of something you know that
sass Squatch isn't real instead of
Sasquatch is
real

so um yeah I'm not sure where Austin
stands with regard to that there is a
word for hallucination at least one word
in poly like we palasa is often
translated as hallucination or as like a
perversion of perception so that even
though all of this could be a kind of
Illusion or

hallucination still um like someone who
is sick someone who's on drugs you know
someone who's Delirious I mean they can
have um even from like the conventional
view you know they can see what isn't

really there but pretty obviously in
terab Buddhism the a lot of this most of
the stuff that that Austin is mentioning
is not considered to be a we palasa or
perversion of perception that you know
it's just as real as anything
else so how does the skeptical Western
approach this with serious earnestness
for one thing you know don't just cling
to you know it's true or it's not true
just be open-minded and accept
everything is a
hypothesis like you read a poly text you
know if it speaks to you that's fine if
if you think it's just
unbelievable that's fine but still try

to be open-minded try to have an open
mind and just you know accept at least
the important stuff as a working
hypothesis when if you cling to
something only this is true anything
else is wrong then I mean you're not
going to make much progress um at least
you're not going to make very Advanced
progress I mean you can still make a lot
of progress at the beginning I mean that
might even be helpful you know you're
just fired up with faith then you know
that can really inspire you to clean up
your life and and get on the track but
eventually you're going to have to let
that stuff
go so how does this Western skeptical

Westerner approached this with serious earnestness um well first of all you should seriously consider the possibility that psychic powers for example might be just as real as Beverages and uh just I mean just accept it as a hypothesis don't you don't have to insist that it's true you don't have to insist that it's not true just be open-minded about it well um I think a lot of skeptical westerners they're like the uh the guy whose sickness is caused by the medicine he takes it's too much PA and not enough s you know too much cleverness and and not enough

Faith or not enough confidence or something so yeah but a person who just insists that that um the dog distract me a little bit somebody who just insists that you know like the Western point of view and like the Western approach to understanding reality like scientific empiricism that that is right and true and that previous cultures were superstitious and they didn't know the truth but now we know it then I mean you're pretty much stuck I mean you're not going to make much progress with that kind of an attitude it it helps to be open-minded it helps to realize that everybody thinks well people in past cultures were superstitious and ignorant

but we got figured out you know the the Christians thought that about the pagans you know the pagans were wrong but what we Christians we've got it figured out and then Along Came you know the the the Renaissance and then the the Reformation or not the Reformation the uh the Enlightenment and then you've got scientific materialist saying well those Christians had it wrong and then let alone the pagans before them that now we got it figured out and there's going to be something that comes after scientific empiricism it may not completely phase out scientific empiricism just as scientific empiricism hasn't completely phased out

Christianity there's still a lot of
churchgoing Christians especially in
South

Carolina so don't be too sure any I mean
any kind of intellectual idea isn't
going to be reality it's just not you're
not going to understand Reality by
thinking about it just keep that in mind
even so the next question is from Joe do
and Joe Doe says can you confirm that
Brian Rue is Canada's highest speaker of
Truth and Brian Rue is a good friend of
mine I really do like him and but I mean
I'm kind of skeptical of him being
Canada's highest speaker of truth
because he is sort of
non-critical with regard to certain

things you know he's he's worked out
this system that works for him but like
just recently he came out with a video
about how the the landing on the moon
was fake but the US government
nevertheless does have UFOs that that
fly to the moon regularly
and or I mean just a lot of his ideas I
I really don't agree with his a lot of
his

ideas so I mean he's a good guy and I
like him and I like doing shows with him
we should be doing more shows pretty
soon but uh I don't think that he is
necessarily Canada's highest speaker of
truth I mean earth told lives not far

from from Brian and I think he's he
might be a better speaker of truth but I
haven't listened to a Carta in a while
so anyways very last question is from
White Ash

Piper this is the last question of them
all for this episode and white ash Piper
says could you speak on the Buddhist
concept of
nonattachment and
yeah I mean

nonattachment it's like clinging it's
it's one of the it's one of the links in
the 12 Links of uh the Orthodox version
of dependent core Rising it's usually
um it's AA Don and poly and literally
that means uptake it can also mean fuel

like like

firewood and uh this non-attachment is
like not Desiring not clinging not
insist in upon things being a certain
way because the world isn't going to
cater to your preferences the external
world to some degree you're creating it
but you're not creating it in an
enlightened way so that I mean even
though most people in the west would
agree that when we have dreams that it's
our own mind generating these dreams but
stuff happens in dreams that you don't
like even though it's your own mind
creating it and this Waking Life
so-called is

similar so I think I'm digressing though
nonattachment oh yeah just just
insisting upon things being a certain
way that that would be attachment that
would be a really good concise way of
defining attachment in in like a
Buddhist ethical sense is just insisting
on PA things being a certain
way because it's it's just not always
going to be that way it's I mean nobody
always gets everything that they want
and if you've ever watched uh ep old
episodes of The Twilight Zone there's
been at least one or two episodes of
somebody finally does get everything
that they want and then they realize
that they're in Hell instead of Heaven

they think they're in heaven they

realize that they died

but

so yeah it's when you insist upon things

being a certain way you're creating

friction especially when you don't get

what you want

and then you suffer you know it's like

you are at odds with the empirical

universe and the empirical universe is

going to

win so it's best just to be able to

accept whatever happens because you

can't really stop it anyway I mean you

can take precautions you know you can

make sure your your car has gas and oil

and enough air in the tires and so forth
but that's different from just refusing
to accept that you just ran out of gas
or just worry even just worrying that
you might run out of gas that's that's
suffering and uh I mean it's it's
relatively mild you know it's you you
will

survive

but I'm I'm sorry I'm not being very
systematic in this explanation can you
speak of on the Buddhist concept of
nonattachment yeah I mean the essence of
it is just insisting upon things being a
certain way and I mean it's it's not why
eyes to insist upon things being a
certain way um not even yourself I mean

trying to insist that other people being
a certain way which is like what many
millions of people in the west tens of
millions maybe hundreds of millions of
people in the west are doing insisting
that people not do anything that they
consider to be offensive for
example or insisting that they live
their lives a certain way I mean it's
not just a postmodern invention it's
people have been this way for a long
time

you know anyone who stands out and
doesn't conform might wind up being
burned at the Stake or
something and then I've I've lost the

thread man I I really lost the thread
that time so I guess that indicates that
I've been talking too
much because we've been at this for a
little over two hours so white ash Piper
white ash Piper can you speak on the
smist concept of non-attachment yeah
just insisting upon things being a
certain way that would be um what causes
suffering that I mean because when
things don't happen the way you want
then you're just against the way things
are so you just have to accept the way
things are although again you can take
wise precautions you know you just but
it's not like you're doing it out of
fear of something bad happening or you

know anything like that you just it's
the right thing to do it's what you
should do you should brush your teeth so
you don't get tooth decay you know but
it's not like you do it out of fear of
tooth decay just it's just what you do
it's sort of like a a minor Duty just to
keep your body going and healthy and so
forth

so I guess I guess I answered it
nonattachment

gosh kind of surprising that that one is
possibly one of the most difficult
question questions to answer or it was
it was so easy that I I was able to
answer it in one sentence and then I'm

just like grasping it straws for like additional stuff to like digress and ramble and Yammer about so let's just call it good I hope white ash Piper can at least somewhat approve of of my answer and uh feel free to ask questions that's what that's what I'm here for is to answer your questions as best I can and of course I'm more likely to be able to answer the question if they're about Buddhism especially terraa Buddhism or about you know my own personal experiences or like living in Burma or caves that kind of thing I do know some Western philosophy you know Western literature that kind of a thing but uh I'd have to say that my my field of

expertise is uh terraa Buddhism and any questions you've got about like what the earliest Buddhism was like or terraa or again you know any of that stuff feel free you're very welcome to ask try to keep questions down to no more than six per episode and uh just leave your questions below in the comments I guess that would be a good place if you have access to the Discord server you can ask them there if you have access to the um my subscribe Star channel you can ask them there and uh feel free to like And subscribe if you haven't already and look at the links down below and be

happy

note there is one more question at the
end after I say that it's over and be
happy don't be happy yet because there's
one more question that I forgot to
answer and then like two hours later I
came back and answered it so just
remember that when I say the first time
I say be happy don't be happy yet and
don't turn off the video because there's
one more question that that I answer
after that so uh don't be happy
hello and welcome to episode 54 of
question and answer I am your host panio
basa and this is your host's beverage
and I am kind of tired or sleepy today
for a relatively perverse reason

partly because of a relatively perverse
reason anyway and that is I am not a
morning person I've never been a morning
person I don't particularly trust
morning people in fact
but because of my new job I have to get
up at five in the morning pretty much
every morning every every morning that I
intend to go to work anyway and
on weekends I like to sleep in I mean
that's like one of the greatest luxuries
in life is just being able to sleep in
and just wake up whenever you feel like
waking up instead of being slammed or
jolted awake by an alarm clock and
unfortunately my body has just gotten
used to getting up at five so I'd go to

bed late you know I can stay up late on weekends and then I get up around five or or wake up around five or six and can't get back to sleep again just because I'm used to getting up at that God awful hour practically still in the middle of the night

but

I'm still quite willing to do my best answering questions and I pretty much have to do them on a weekly basis now just because

um more people are asking more questions which is good I mean that's why I'm here you know but um still

we're going to uh make this maybe not

every time but

I think it's gonna be

um once a week more often than once

every two weeks

um

for the foreseeable future I guess

let's just see how it goes

so the first question is from bodhisatta

969

and bodhisota 969 says what would you

say are the most important things for a

terravada lay person to do or practice

who doesn't have a Sangha nearby Sila

meditation which one reading the majum

in the Kaya Etc and how can he grow in

the dhamma without a Sangha or is it

even possible to achieve Awakening or

only a better reincarnation

well I mean if you're a solitary

Buddhist and I mean it's not necessarily

a great handicap I mean if you read some

some Buddhist texts especially for

example the kagawisana suto or the the

rhinoceros horn discourse uh it does say

that the solitary life is the best for

practicing dharma in fact there's also a

Burmese Buddhist saying this is

which means one Monk Is dhamma two monks

is conversation and three monks is just

worthless

so I mean that would apply to lay people

that are practicing as well as monks I

suppose

so what would be the most important
things for terravala Lay person to do or
practice

who doesn't have a Sangha nearby well

keeping just keeping Sila and

I can say meditating I don't meditate

Much Anymore mostly it's like

spontaneous walking meditation when I

meditate now

um sometimes like do a little bit of

Mantra that's about as far as it goes

and um

I may uh go into greater detail

discussing this possibly even today

after this I'm going to be doing a show

with Brian Rue and we may be discussing

that very topic so I may direct you to

that

um yeah I mean that would be the three
main things for for a Buddhist light
person to do either

um alone or with a song guys you know
keep the precepts meditate as well as
you are you know able to do

um be generous you know Donna

you know give alms if not to uh monks
walking in arms around in front of your
house which may not happen very often in
non-budious countries but you know just
you know whoever needs the money and
isn't just gonna blow it on drugs that
sort of thing you know you see a
homeless person who's

you know maybe they're not a drug addict
they're just you're just going to be
contributing to their drug use I mean
that might not be the purest

um

the purest generosity but it depends on
your mental States

and also studying dhamma so yeah reading
the Maji manikaya reading the sutiny

Pata reading a few verses from the

domapara every night before you go to

bed just kind of having your last

um awaking thoughts

about dhamma before you roll over and go

to bed and start thinking about

something else

so that'd be the main thing so yeah just

a review

you know keeping Sila meditating

practicing generosity to the extent that

you are able and studying dhamma

and that'd be reading text preferably

translations of the polytexts or in the

original poly of course if you uh can

read Paulie

and so I think I answered that question

so we'll just um move on to the next

question this is from maitreya Buddha

who you would think wouldn't have to ask

questions

and maitreya Buddha says why is laying

down forbidden in Buddhism isn't one of

the most common Buddha statues the

Buddha laying down on his side with his head resting on his hand right before attaining parinibbana so this is kind of a misconception it was talking about never lying down in the previous q a and that is a dutongka practice which is one of the 13

standardized optional extra ascetic practices that a monk can practice and so it's purely optional the Buddha himself lay down

um most probably most of the Buddha's disciples slept in a in a prone you know horizontal position um

so yeah I mean the Buddha when he died according to the tradition he was

lying between two Saul trees on the
probably on a on like one of his robes
full you know it's kind of spread out
for him to lie on and he lay on that and
he died in a lying position that's why
the the party nibana mudra you know the
Buddha lying on his side in the
so-called Lions position
um you know that's that's uh
representing his death his uh exit from
samsara so to speak
and um the monks who do lie down they're
not even supposed to admit to lying down
because it it's a
because it's a dotonga practice do
tongas are supposed to be kept secret

you know it's like you tell your
preceptor or your teacher or some other
senior monk you know you can take the
the dutongas you know officially in his
presence but you don't go around telling
other other people and I think I've told
the story before I think it's in the
wisudi Maga about two monks
who happen to be sharing a cabin one
night
and one of them had been doing the
sitting practice he didn't sleep in a
horizontal position he would sit up and
sleep and so
the two monks in the middle of the night
are
you know sleeping or you know almost

sleeping or something and then there's a lightning storm and a flash of lightning lights up the inside of the cabin and the monk who's lying down can see that the other monk is in a sitting position so he asked him would you do the sitting practice

and then immediately the monk who was sitting there

lies down and says no

and then the very next night he just starts doing the sitting practice again because you're supposed to conceal your aesthetic practices at least the concealable ones the way a thief conceals his ill-gotten gains so to

Speak

So

uh I guess I'll just move on to this question then I think I answered that the next question is from Raja Kumara son of the king

something along those lines the boy of the king

and uh Raju Kamara says

do you have any personal experience with Kanda Parita

when you were a monk how did you handle when you were surrounded by snakes

mosquitoes Etc well my main personal

experience with the Kanda Parita is I

would chant every day it was just a

tradition in the Tom Pulu tradition the

monks chant the conda suta

um which I believe is in the vineyard in
the rules of monastic discipline a monk
gets bitten by a snake and dies so the
monk or so the Buddha teaches the monks
you know you chant this this suta and it
will protect you from being bitten by
snakes and even if you get bitten you
won't die

and I like the conda sutta it was one of
my favorite parittas just because I like
snakes I like animals and the whole
purpose of the conda sutta is just
sending Māta to all the not only the
four families of snakes but also to
multi-legged creatures four-legged

creatures two-legged creatures and
legless creatures which is the snakes
themselves plus I guess like worms or
something

but I really didn't need to send meta
um systematically to snakes because I
just like snakes like when I was in
Burma if I would see a snake I'd be
happy you know I just feel pity like Joy
when I would see a snake it's basically
if I saw a big one I mean almost
stepping on a Viper or something yeah
that's startling but I never had any bad
feelings towards snakes I just like
snakes and the first time I ever saw a
cobra especially when it was like
standing up on its uh hind legs so to

speaking you know this it's it's Hood

spread and everything I was just in a
state of rapture

I think there's a good chance assuming
that rebirth happens that uh Way Way

Back in prehistoric times I was some
kind of Shaman in Northwestern India who
worshiped cobras or something

mosquitoes and even worse than

mosquitoes where the the biting flies I

really didn't like those I would I'd

cuss them out I would I would cuss at

insects

and uh I think they would be inclined to

bite me even if I chanted the condo suit

a wholeheartedly on a regular basis

but yeah my only experience real
experience in the condo parita is
chanting it and also finding it in the
in the veneer itself it is a canonical
burrito so I'll just move on to Raja
kumara's next question

and he says in the angura nikaya 467
which is meta for snakes

there is a story where a monk went to
meditate in the forest and he died after
being bitten by a snake when the Buddha
found about this he told other monks
quote

monks that monk did not radiate thoughts
of loving kindness toward the four royal
tribes of snakes

monks had he done so that monk would not

have died of a snake bite unquote there
is also a story of ajan fuang
who is anjan tunisaro's teacher uh who
drove away a snake with thoughts of meta
what's your thoughts and experience on
this well I mean

I don't know how you would drive away
somebody with with loving kindness I
mean

um maybe drive away is not the best way
of putting it but uh my thoughts on EX
yeah I mean if you have and one reason
why I was never afraid of snakes is
because I really just spontaneously
gushed meta towards snakes I didn't have
to do it systematically as a practice it

just happened spontaneously and so I've
really never been afraid of snakes

um I mean it can be startled like you

have to go out at night to pee and it's
dark and you step on a stick or

something that they kind of you know

it's sort of a bent stick so that when

you step on one end the other end kind

of slaps upwards or or makes a rattling

sound or something because there's like

Dead Leaves stuck to it or something and

yeah I mean it you it can really startle

you

but um

aside from that I mean just not wanting

to get bitten by a Russell's Viper

um yeah I mean I've never really had

problems with snakes I've always liked
snakes

so

my thoughts and experience on this I
really don't have a whole lot of
experience

um I mean I've got lots of experience
with snakes but I don't have experience
with you know trying to protect myself
from snakes because I just like snakes
and you just

um bear in mind that a snake I mean
aside from the occasional Russell's

Viper I got chased by a Russell's Viper
once it was a little baby one about this
long and it's just like lunging at me

like chasing me down the road

but for the most part if you leave them

alone doesn't matter if it's scorpions

spiders snakes whatever it is as a

general rule if you leave them alone

they're going to leave you alone they

only bite or attack if they feel

threatened so I mean sometimes you can

just

accidentally act in a threatening manner

you know you're like taking wood off the

wood pile and there's a snake underneath

and it feels you know alarmed because

all of a sudden it's hiding place has

been dismantled but as a general rule

just bear that in mind and it helps you

not to have fear or hatred I mean you

still have to have caution of course but
the fear and the hatred and is just
irrelevant it's just unnecessary you
know it's just counterproductive
so I guess

uh there's one animal mentioned in the
condo suit and now since we're talking
about the condo suta and I can't
remember what it is I should have looked
it up before it's uh

I think that the official Burmese
um explanation of this animal and I I'm
sorry I can't remember the the poly name
for it but they say that it's a house
gecko and why you would need protection
from house geckos I don't know although

some monks offer the the the the uh the
idea that when a house gecko craps in
the water the water becomes poisonous
but I think it would be some kind of
wasp

it translates into something like Arrow
being
so

but I'm I'm rambling I ramble a lot so I
think I'll just move on to the next
question

maybe he asked me to he asked the wrong
person about

like protection from snakes because I
just feel naturally protected this
because I I just genuinely like snakes
especially big ones

so I'll just move on next question here
this is from the Arya sawasti project
and the Aria swasti project says
greetings Ponyo since as Buddhists we
don't believe in any kind of God is it
possible that if enough Believers of
Christianity or any other mainstream
religion gave enough Credence to their
belief in a God that it would actually
create the god they believe in
and that's an interesting idea I have
kind of toyed with this idea myself and
I was told by a knowledgeable Pagan that
this kind of God that it exists because
of the belief of all these people you
know it's their faith in this being this

causes this being to exist in in some
metaphysical way that that is called an
aggregor

which is kind of a

kind of reminds me of Manticore or
something

and

I think that's possible especially I
mean if you read Lord of the Flies the
novel forget the movies they just
completely like did away with all the
symbolic meaning of it but Lord of the
Flies the the idea I mean Lord of the
Flies I mean is the novel is about these
kids on an island but Lord of the Flies
is the English translation of the name
Beelzebub

and what it's like the whole nature
of the devil really is the point of
this novel even though most people who
read it may be completely clueless it's
about the devil at all

but there's this monster in the
in the story and the point is that the
devil is real even though he doesn't
have this discreet

you know individual existence that he
exists in this shadowy dark part of the
human mind and you've got so many humans
you got an entire population of humans
with this dark shadowy part in a way
that dark shadowy part is like a cell in
in this being you know and then he's

he's an accumulation of all these little
dark shadowy parts that makes this
powerful real being

and so there's that sort of thing too

and also I do think it's possible that
you can have sort of a

a being that's maybe on the verge of
this version of reality that has sort of
like a weak tenuous existence but the
more people that believe in it or or
like are dedicated to it that it

strengthens that being and gives it a
foothold in this version of reality so
there's that too

but getting to his question about can uh
can a God be like essentially an egregor
yeah I don't see why not I'm No

Authority on this subject

but it does make sense to me that you
know in ancient Greece or Rome where
you've got literally millions of people
believing in Apollo for example
then

they're I mean their faith in Apollo
could presumably you know heal
sicknesses perform other kinds of
so-called Miracles and you know they can
have visions they can hear him

Communications and so forth

um I mean and you get to a certain point
where it just

I mean you hesitate to just call it Mass
hallucination

for example I'm not a Christian
obviously and so I'm pretty skeptical
that Jesus is you know hearing prayers
and answering prayers right now he may
be a Deva and some high heaven around me
maybe a Brahma and something even higher
Heaven realm now you know he may be a
god at this point but I don't consider
him to be the only begotten son of you
know Jehovah God Almighty but so many
people have believed in Jesus you know
over the centuries just fervently
without a shadow of a doubt and there
have been really wise saintly people
that have believed in Jesus
that

I mean they may have created a new Jesus

I mean it's it may have little to do
with you know Yeshua you know The
Carpenter's son who became the leader of
John the Baptist's group and and could
you know had some ability to work
wonders and so forth this is
this is like a different Jesus that's
like an aggregore but nevertheless you
could say that in a sense is is real
this is strange I mean what kind of
karma did Jesus of Nazareth make for
himself

so yeah I hope I answered that question
but as I say I'm No Authority so I'll
just move on to the Arya sawasdi

Project's next question which is kind of

an interesting one also have you ever
found yourself disagreeing with any of
the Buddha's teachings
and

that's hard to answer because even
though I've studied terravonna Buddhism
studied the polytechs for 30 years as a
monk

and uh you know to some degree before
and after

it's difficult to know exactly what the
Buddha did and did not teach

um I do not consider the polytopitica to
be a 100 accurate historical document is
with verbatim quotes of godama Buddha I
mean there may be a few verbatim quotes
in there that may be quite a few but I

do not consider the polytext to be
reliable in conveying what the
historical godama Buddha actually taught
so I definitely disagree with some of
the teachings of taravana Buddhism

um

or I'm just skeptical of them

so we can say that but I mean whether

I'm disagreeing what the Buddha really
taught or I'm just

um disagreeing with some later addition
to the text is hard to say

so I mean and even then it's like

I guess it's human nature you read

something in a taxi and you just don't

want to believe it you know like the

stories of fire breathing dragons for
example you know I can say well you know
that is uh it's an artifact of
prehistoric North Indian cobra worship
that turned into a kind of Mythology and
people believed in these
um and so they wound up being added into
the text partly as a kind of propaganda
you know it's that so that you know the
Cobra worshipers would see that the
Buddhists have authority over the cobras
and so forth

um

so you can you can be skeptical and it's
not like I disagree with with the Buddha
it's like well I'm skeptical of this and
I'm not so sure the Buddha actually

taught it like the 12 knee Donna theory
of of dependent coal Rising I do not
accept that as what the Buddha really
taught that was I do not consider that
to be his best explanation of what
dependent core Rising was I do think
that it evolved over time you know over
maybe a century and it sort of coalesced
into this 12 nidano Theory but um with
regard to the oldest texts
um what I consider to be the oldest
teachings like you know the core
philosophy of the antagawaga I mean I
accept that more easily than any other
part of the polytopitica and that's one
reason why I was able to stay a monk for

30 years

even though I'm fairly skeptical of the reliability of the polytopitica because what not only myself but what other Scholars other so-called authorities claim to be you know the most archaic earliest teachings those are the teachings that really resonate with me the most

so I probably have disagreed with some of the Buddha's teachings probably out of my own foolishness or because the Buddha was just giving lip service to you know ancient Indian cosmology or something that was you know he was a product of his culture at least the the outward form of the Buddha you know sort

of the samsaric manifestation of godama
Buddha I mean it was a product of his of
his culture just like anybody else
and so he would say things that were in
agreement with you know common common
beliefs of the Iron Age Ganges Valley
that people nowadays just don't accept
so there's a good chance of it but it's
hard to say exactly what the Buddha
really did teach

um so it may be that I'm disagreeing
with lots of it like if the Burmese are
correct and that the polydipitica is at
least 98 just authentic historical
documents then yeah I'm just a Shameless
heretic and I'll burn in hell for wrong

view pernicious wrong you

so yeah it's kind of a hard question to

answer because you can't really know

with 100 certainty

what is and is not the Buddhist

teachings as you find it in the

polytexts

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

question here this is from Athena sigil

and Athena's sigil says would you

consider yourself more of a conservative

or libertarian I know this is not a

political Channel but you've mentioned

it politics in earlier videos yeah I'm I

I dabble in a little bit of political

trolling sometimes my the the current

blog that I'm not writing for as

regularly as I was when I was a monk
it's got quite a lot of politics in it
in fact

some of my older videos with uh Brian
Roo also are very political but I've
taken down most of the um the edgy
political stuff just because YouTube is
very censorious

so

do I consider myself more of a
conservative or libertarian I see
um like weak weaknesses of both
conservatism and libertarianism
conservatism I mean you can't just cling
to the way things have been just cling
to tradition that's that's what a

conservative does by definition I
suppose you know they want to conserve
what you know what has led them you know
LED their culture to its current
state of greatness or semi-greatness or
or whatever and I mean you have to
innovate sometimes you know like that
was one of the strengths of the ancient
Romans is that they were traditionalists
fairly conservative I mean they're like
fascistically conservative by my
post-modern standards but if they saw
some other culture was doing things
better than they were doing them they
would adopt that
and that's a good idea I mean if only
for the sake of you know the struggle

for existence between societies and
cultures you know you can't let yourself
get out competing
so there has to be Innovation you just
have to choose it carefully so I mean
conservatism is like a good default
setting you know you go with what
has proven itself to work I'm not I'm
not a progressive definitely
so conservatism is like a good default
setting where you stay with what has
worked what has served your civilization
well enough and led it to this point you
know up to now
but still you have to innovate there has
to be a certain amount of progress

libertarianism where everyone just
follows their own conscience
it lacks cohesion if everyone is just
like scatter shot
where
um you know they just do as as they
please so long as they're not harming
others you know it's like you know a
Libertarian I assume would believe that
you have the right to do whatever you
want to do so long as you're not you
know infringing upon anybody else's
well-being or or like their physical
well-being or their their rights that
sort of thing I mean hurting someone's
feelings I assume most Libertarians
think that you know it's it's okay to

misgender somebody for example

so it's it lacks the the cohesive

property of

of of conservatism I mean you don't have

like these traditions

um

then I mean it makes everything loose

and also

um it's just not

conducive to the strength of society in

my opinion so I mean you have to have

sort of like a

like a compromise of conservatism like

traditions

core values you know like a a system of

of values

and early America America up until
relatively recently was really strong in
that regard I mean you could you could
follow different religions
you could dress it differently you could
do do all kinds of different things but
still there were certain values like you
know the the rights of the individual
you know

and just America is you know a good
country and you know it promotes freedom
and so forth that those who are values
that strengthened America because it
helped people to be patriotic and to
love their country and be willing to
fight for their country whereas now
especially the left is just trying to

hate on America and get everyone in
America to hate on America and just
bring it down to the level of a third
world country apparently
far as I can tell so I guess what I
would consider myself more than anything
would be like a
like uh
a classical liberal not liberal in the
the American sense of left wing but
liberal in the sense of John Stuart Mill
and his essay on Liberty
where I mean there has to be a certain
amount of like Traditional Values and so
forth but still you know so long as
you've got enough of that to like cause

the cohesion of the society
and people to actually you know favor
their own their own culture their own
Society then then you can have like lots
of of Liberty aside from that so I guess
I guess that'd be a classical liberal
which comes closer to libertarian I
guess there's a lot of overlap between
classical liberals and Libertarians but
I'm not particularly conservative I have
considered that I mean out of my desire
to see America get itself out of this
hole that's been digging itself into
that I mean I might be willing to take
the hit and let America go back to just
being like this
like Christianity oriented culture even

though I'm not a Christian just for the
sake of strengthening America again I
mean I'd be willing to take a hit for
the team in that case I guess

but I also guess I'll be moving on to
the next question here and this is from
ludibus balam

and ludovus balam gives the advance
warning sorry in advance it's a weird
question

and here here's ludibus belongs a weird
question assuming a man with a regular
heterosexual libido had sex with a woman
for the first time out of mutual
volition and the man had low sexual
craving not toward her but in general

and that due to automatic sense
restraint could not bring himself to
finish the ACT physically or have any
sustained craving all else considered
did he make sexual Karma considering he
didn't have past experience didn't crave
it but chose to attempt it and did
penetrate

well I mean this there's a little bit of
contradiction here because at the
beginning it says assuming a man with a
regular heterosexual libido

so I mean it might just be saying that
he's not gay or something but a regular
heterosexual libido in a guy has the guy
being horny some of the time
and uh you know he'd be having craving

to get his rocks off

preferably into uh

a female

but um

let's see here let's read these

conditions he's got the regular

heterosexual libido

kind of I mean that's kind of seems kind

of arguable if you read the rest of this

um he has sex with a woman for the first

time out of mutual volition they're both

willing and the man had low sexual

craving not toward her but in general

and that due to automatic sense

restraint could not bring himself to

finish to act physically or have any

sustained craving all else considered
did he make sexual Karma considering he
didn't have past experience didn't crave
it well I mean there's still going to be
sexual Karma it's not going to be as
you know as intense it's not going to be
as strong of karma as if he is just
going for it and just you know yelling
exclamations and making loud noises so
the neighbors are pounding on the walls
and so forth

and then uh yeah well I won't go into
further details but you can just imagine
this on your own I'm sure

um I mean at the very least I mean

he had to have the volition to do it and
volition is karma

you know Kama is cheating up
so to the extent that he was
wanting to do it
and apparently I mean he wouldn't have
done it if he didn't want to I mean he
wasn't forced into it or anything
maybe just out of curiosity but still
it's kind of a casual desire to do it
just to see what it's like
so it'd be it'd be more subtle comma
than the sex addict
but um still I mean he'd be making some
comma so long as it was a volitional act
so long as he's not enlightened
and I assume I mean if you read the text
in a fully enlightened being isn't going

to want to have sex with anybody

not even with his own hand

so once you could not bring himself to

finish the ACT

yeah I mean even the sense restraint

involved in that is there's a certain

amount of karma involved because it's

like this habitual in into some degree

it's kind of neurotic I mean I've

experienced this sort of thing before

where I mean you just this sense

restraint that you're trained in as a

monk is just no no no no no no so that

can become like an obstacle I mean for a

monk it's a useful obstacle I suppose

but um

yeah I think I think I answered the

question so I'm just going to move on to
the next one here and this is from
ketchup

and ketchup says

what are ways to cultivate some Wega and
Pasada constantly in the mind thank you

panyabasa well you're welcome even

though I haven't answered it yet and

um I guess I should Define the poly

terms here some Wega is a sense of like
spiritual

urgency or alarm you know it's like I

gotta practice you know I just you just

feel this state of you know I can't

waste my life I'm gonna die someday I

gotta practice dama while I've got the

chance and then Posada is I mean
literally means something like Clarity
sometimes it's translated as faith I
think bikubody prefers confidence
but it's just being like at peace and
just clear about dhamma you know it's
like you are satisfied relatively I mean
nothing is entirely satisfactory but you
know you know you're on the right track
and it your beliefs and your practice
are giving you comfort and sort of a
spring in your step and you're you're
holding your head high and your face is
clear and your mind is you know you've
got Clarity on on the issue of how to
live your life or what to believe that
sort of thing

so ketchup here is asking what are ways
to cultivate samwega and Posada
constantly in the mind well good luck
trying to cultivate some Wega constantly
I mean

um one time well twice actually I went
to see autopsies at the Mandalay city
morgue in Burma that's a whole that's
the story all on its own but I remember
the first time I went in there before I
saw the autopsy just walking through the
morgue and just seeing you know dead
people lying on slabs I mean I won't go
into all the details but I remember when
I walked outside it was just a bright
sunny day and there's kids playing and

laughing and there's this young teenage
guy flirting with these girls and the
girls how these other girls walking
along just chattering and giggling and
so forth and it's like how can you be so
I don't know what's in this building
right here you know it's like we're all
gonna die

and and that's somewega where
um you know you just get struck with
this sense of urgency like I just gotta
practice dhamma but the thing is
trying to cultivate that constantly I
mean you can't be in a constant state of
alarm because I mean you get used to
stuff like you know I used to have a
human skeleton with all the joints you

know articulated with wires and stuff
sitting out in front of my cave and I
also had a human skull just inside the
cave and eventually just becomes part of
the furniture it's just part of the
background it's like you got a picture
on the wall

you've seen that picture a thousand
times it hardly even registers in your
mind the same is true of you know
skeletons and and and skulls and so
forth

so I think I mean you'd have to change
it up I mean you have to be coming up
with new ways of jolting yourself into
the state of spiritual urgency and um it

may be one of the best ways that I can think of

to cultivate some way guys volunteer to do charitable work at like an old folks home where you're seeing people near the ends of their lives a lot of them are just in states of Despair or they're just semi-conscious their their health is failing you know that kind of a thing yeah that might be one of the best ways of cultivating some Vega in the west is just uh visiting old folks homes and trying to help the old folks there with regard to Persona the best way of cultivating Pasada is to practice dhamma and just see from your own experience that it is helping you is making you

healthier or mentally healthier anyway
happier and wiser you know it's just the
just the experiential knowledge that
you're going in a good direction is the
best way of cultivating this kind of of
clarity or confidence
foreign

I hope I answered that question
so I'll just move on to the next
question this is from Jules

wait a minute

wait a minute here

gosh I think I think I attributed to the
Aria swasti project a question from
Jules because this question from Jules
is have you ever found yourself

disagreeing with any of the Buddhist
teachings

so yes the same question same exact
question so I assume it's from Jules and
to jewels I apologize for attributing
your question to the Aria swasti project
and to the Aria swasti project I
apologize for attributing your question
to Jules just in case I'm covering my
ass here

and just rewind

five minutes or something

so I'll just move one next question here
and this is from Fred and I'm not sure
if this is a real question to be
answered on this q a because Fred
sometimes throws in gratuitous question

marks

it happens

any likes just sort of tossing in ideas
and and feedback and so forth but there
is a question mark at the end of this so

I'm going to read it it was in the
comments under a q a

so he says I heard gandaba can smell and
hear what's your thoughts

well

they I don't think they can smell your
thoughts I don't think thoughts have a
smell unless you're having like an old
factory thought maybe

yeah I don't fully understand the part
about the gun gundamas probably do have

a sense of smell

but uh

I guess I should Define gandaba a

gandaba is like a small G God that's

just one level above the human level

they're in the the like the the realm of

the Four Kings and the Four Kings are

the the Four Kings guarding the the

various directions of the the map of the

Earth you know like

um the snow dog is guardian of the north

according to rush anyway

um

so the gandamas are like they're sort of

like fairies

um there's like Heavenly musicians they

they serve as servants and entertainers

to the higher gods the higher small G
gods

and maybe they can hear your thoughts I
mean

I guess I mean maybe Fred maybe I'm just
not understanding this question I heard
gandaba can smell and hear what's your
thoughts

and it's not they hear what's your
thoughts that would be mind reading

which small G gods do have I mean they
can't read minds if they want to maybe
not all of them but a lot of them can

but now I'm starting to think that this
question means I heard gandaba can smell
on here

semicolon what's your thoughts and so
he's probably not even referring to the
the small G Gods one level above the
human level because gandaba also can
mean a being

ready for rebirth you know it's like
um

there's in in terravonna Buddhism
they're talking about the the requisites
for

um conception like you have to have the
man and the woman coming together there
has to be the the moisture or the you
know the the seed coming together and
there has to be the gandaba which is
like the the karmic momentum
of the being who is going to be born as

this person

and so maybe Fred is asking if this

karmic momentum of this being called a

gandaba who's going to

um manifest as the the baby

who's going to enter the fertilized egg

at conception

that they can smell in hear

so it's sort of like

I mean maybe he's even asking if a

zygote a fertilized egg can smell in

here

it may be that they have memories of

smelling and hearing but they wouldn't

have a nose yet they wouldn't have ears

yet

um unless he's thinking of like this
being you know sort of like a homunculus
who enters into the fertilized egg this
is kind of a confusing question for
being a relatively short one

um

yeah it may be that before they merge
into the zygote

but then the way abhidham explains
things is that you can't have or
doesn't explain the way rebirth works
the way a lot of like Hindus explain it
there has there there's like an
instantaneous

from one like the moment you die the
very next moment you know like a
trillionth of a second later you have to

enter into some other existence so it
may be just right the moment after a
person dies their Consciousness stops
they're just boom right back into a an
egg being fertilized

but I mean you can't have intermediate
States you know they're like like the
Bardo Realms talked about by the
Tibetans you know it's like 49 days or
something which would be sort of as sort
of a spirit being I mean that's possible
I mean you can still fit that into the
system it'd just be the next moment
you're this temporary spirit being
and then you find the the appropriate
egg or or zygote you know the

appropriate mother and father uh getting
it on

um

let's see

so whether they can smell in here I mean
if they're this kind of being not just
you know the person dies the very next
moment it's you know egg fertilization
time probably then there wouldn't be
much smelling and hearing going on but I
mean if there is like this spirit being
who is like the like the gandaba you
know like the the literal gandaba the
Heavenly musician the fairy being or
whatever

um yeah I assume they can smell it here
up until they merge into the embryo you

know become part of the embryo and then
it's just they're concerned with
multiplying cells and growing organs and
so forth

foreign

this is from rui

and rui says hello Ponyo is a doctrine
of emptiness possible without an
accompanying doctrine of two truths
so the doctrine of emptiness

um

that we're kind of getting into majama
realm here maybe maybe I should put on

The majama Fez just to say

is so profound You Gotta Wear The Fez

Okay so

is a doctrine of emptiness possible
without an accompanying doctrine of two
truths well I guess we have to do a
little defining of terms here emptiness
it doesn't mean nothingness emptiness is
like a biakada in in Pali it means
indeterminate I mean
it's it's just off the scale you can't
describe it with words because in order
to describe something in words you've
got to reify it into this thing or
entity and Emptiness is not a thing or
an entity
I might get into this a little later
there's there's somebody else talking
about this a little lower down here on
the list

so

the two truths are

ultimate truth in Pali Parramatta Sacha

and conventional truth or samudi Sacha

so Samuri Sacha conventional truth is

two and two is for I'm sitting here

wearing a fez

drinking sweet tea

Carson cities the capital of Nevada

Epstein didn't kill himself that kind of

thing

whereas ultimate truth is beyond words

you know it's it's like the kantian

thing in itself you cannot use words to

describe it you know Kant also had two

truths yet the thing is it seems and the

thing is it really is
and all we can really deal with is the
thing is it seems because dealing just
by its very nature is one of the things
that seems and it can't it it just
cannot reach over this unbridgeable gulf
into Ultimate Reality as long as you're
thinking and symbols you can't touch
alternate reality even though we're just
wallowing it all the time because how
far away can Ultimate Reality be
so with that as a preamble
is a doctrine of emptiness possible
without an accompanying doctrine of two
truth I think some of the radical
majamaica Buddhists really did do away
with the two truths where

um

even emptiness itself is you can't
really call it a truth I mean it was
some of the early majomoka Buddhists
were so radical you know they couldn't
call emptiness anything
you know they just had to leave it alone
you know you just just argue every
argument to death
and then just kind of step back and
leave the The Emptiness behind or in
front of you or whatever I guess if
you're stepping back at me in front of
you
so yeah I mean you could have
theoretically

um just do away with any truths at all
but then you the doctrine of emptiness
itself is still there so that kind of
kicks that idea in the head but I mean
you could just say that conventional
truth isn't really true at all
and then just stick with that and then
you just have the one truth of ultimate
truth and I could live with that I can
you know I can I could see that as a
valid way of arguing things
so I mean
theoretically some Majolica Buddhists
even came up with like three truths
where it was like
you got ultimate truth would be on the
Unspeakable you know the the the doubt

that can be named is not the Eternal Dao
you know the name that can be named is
not the Eternal name

um you know they got that highest truth
and then below they got the conventional
truth of Carson cities the capital of
Nevada and all that and then in between
they've got sort of like what Kant was
doing with his categories it's like you
know the structure of delusion you know
the structure of how we come up with
these conventional truths is sort of
like a higher truth it's still not
ultimate truth

but it's sort of in between sort of like
in terawada Buddhism you've got ultimate

truth and then you sort of got abidama
truth

sorry about that you got like the
abidama explanation of reality and then
you've got you know Carson City is the
capital of Nevada or you know

uh

sawati is the capital of magada yeah
yeah

that sort of thing so yeah I mean it's
not necessary

that you have to have the doctrine of
two truths with a doctrine of emptiness

so I'll take I'll take the Fez off now

God's a good first it's really a nice

fuzz so the next question

is from seal vaccine and he's being very

subtle in his question asking this time
and so his first question is I thought
right if you was realizing the four
noble truths directly which would make
all Buddhists as far as I know
technically able to have this right view
is this correct or does Right View also
Encompass other things it can Encompass
other things like a belief in karma
um the belief that you have like moral
obligation to look after your parents
that sort of thing I mean that's that's
mentioned in like the stock lists with
regard to right view in the texts
so there are other things and right view
it I mean it's it's adjustable like when

you when you're a beginner you just have
like this crude map

you know of this is the direction I have
to go because of this and this reason

you know I have to know how to meditate
and why to meditate and you know there's
a certain amount of

um like Foundation to that like the

belief in karma and you know the four

noble truths and you know that sort of a
thing but then as you get more

sophisticated in your practice you know
your right view is going to become more
sophisticated

so most Buddhists

at least most Orthodox or you know

non-heretical Buddhists uh who who know

anything about Buddhism they uh they can
have like the the simple beginning Right
View

but I mean to really penetrate
intuitively the four noble truths I mean
you'd have to be enlightened for that
or one moment before enlightenment
so I think I'll just uh

gosh I answered it so quickly and kind
of embarrassed you know it's like maybe
I should have spent another 10 minutes
rambling about this one

uh let's see

this right view also Encompass other
things I I think I answered that and
this next question is kind of similar so

I'll just move on to CEO of action and
cod zidane's next question here
and he says

I remember you talking about how being
enlightened doesn't necessarily mean you
will be a saint

um yeah I have heard that a stream
enterer after glimpsing nibana is able
to enter nibana many times after doing
it once and still not reach a higher
level of sainthood

what do you think about Buddhism
disregarding being able to enter nibbana
as the ultimate achievement and instead
focuses more on the destruction of
craving and the end of suffering well
the destruction of craving and the end

of suffering

technically is nimana at least according to the uh the Orthodox tradition and with regard to a soda upon on being able to access nibana I don't think that that is an original teaching of the Buddha the whole four stages of sainthood you know Soda panason

I do think is a later artifact

um

so let's see yeah according to the text once you become an ariya then you can get these flashes of of nibbana but they don't they don't stay and even a fully enlightened being like the Buddha himself you know he's not in nabana all

the time and I just I just can't buy it
I just don't think so I think if you're
fully enlightened

I mean you

are I mean you've always gotten nibana
there you I mean you've you're you're
aware of alternate reality at all times
so let's see what do I think about

Buddhism disregarding being able to
enter nibana as the ultimate achievement
and instead focuses more on the
destruction of craving and the ending of
suffering

um

yeah I mean entering nabana as the
ultimate achievement CEO of actions here
seems to be referring to nabana as like

a metaphysical State and not an ethical State because niblana has an ethical state is essentially the destruction of craving in the end of suffering the end of delusion also I suppose I mean there's all these you know equally valid invalid ways of describing nibana that can sort of help you to at least feel kind of secure when thinking that you thinking about it but I mean no definition is really going to touch it because as I say anything that's symbolic cannot touch Ultimate Reality so what do I think about Buddhism disregarding being yeah I think part of that is just an artifact of later Terra

modern Orthodox philosophy

that I really don't think it works that way

so I think I'll just move on to the next question here also from CEO of action C pod zero now in nasutas the Buddha's cousin devadata was able to perform many psychic powers yet Gain No wisdom and ended up going to the lowest hell Realms if someone like that could Master psychic powers why do you think we never see someone like that today use psychic powers to attain Fame and power they could certainly prove every materialist wrong immediately if they were flying around and being in multiple places at once for their own gain and then there

was somebody responded to this on the
under the the YouTube video that was
saying yeah they were essentially saying
yeah that's that's good evidence that
psychic powers just don't exist at all
it's just make believe or Superstition
or something

but first of all David Donna was able to
perform many psychic powers it gained no
wisdom

and he gained wisdom he just wasn't
sufficient you know he was sort of like
this amoral wisdom

so I mean he got wisdom but it was
amoral I mean he mastered Jonna which is
very difficult to do most people can do

that it wasn't just you know he was just
this evil I mean he's like you know this
ancient you know Hunter Biden let's say
and just was able to do these psychic
powers

so

um so he did cultivate wisdom you know
you have to have

purity of of Sila in order to have
enough purity of mind that you can

Master Jonna

so it was just that the

it just wasn't sufficient to get him
enlightened or something

um it was like this amoral kind of of
wisdom

and then he sort of fell back from it

you know he backslid

so let's see

yeah he supposedly according to the

legend he tried to murder the Buddha and

and went to hell for it

let's see if someone like that could

Master psychic powers why do you think

we never see someone like that today use

psychic powers to attain Fame and Power

well if they desire Fame and power they

lack the wisdom to really master that

sort of thing

for starters deal with data's motives

were different I mean despite the evil

motives projected onto him in the texts

um you know I'm fairly skeptical that it

even tried to murder the Buddha I mean
this is all legends
so they could certainly prove every
material that's wrong immediately if
they were flying around and being in
multiple places at once for their own
gain well I mean if they're doing it for
their own gain they lack the wisdom for
that sort of thing the real masters of
psychic powers still are people who have
mastered meditation and as a general
rule you master meditation through
dedicating your life to it as even David
was doing that I mean he was diligently
meditating out in forests and so forth
and renounce the world essentially
and neem Crowley Baba whose picture is

up there

up there

I mean he did this sort of thing also

um I mean he wasn't just doing like

magic shows all the time but I mean

there's he had a lot of

um a lot of disciples

who are first-hand witnesses to some

just really just impossible stuff that

he was doing including Ram Das

so

the thing is

they could certainly prove every

material that's wrong immediately if

they're flying around the thing is

people have to believe in this stuff

it's it's it reminds me of the story of Jesus in the New Testament where he was able to do Miracles at the very least he was able to heal the sick and so forth then he goes back to his hometown of Nazareth

and the people in his hometown in Nazareth are saying hey isn't that Jesus The Carpenter's son I mean Jonas brothers and sisters live here in town I mean who does he think he is and because they lacked faith in him he wasn't able to do very many miracles he healed a few sick people maybe just you know asthma or cases of Sniffles or something and you know cast out maybe a like a wimpy demon or two and then just went

somewhere else because people didn't believe in him and even when he would heal somebody he would say it's your own faith that healed him and so I mean there has to be an acceptance of the possibility of this in order for it to happen and when you're living in a spiritually bankrupt materialistic version of reality just a materialistic culture where people firmly believe you can't do that then it's way less likely to happen so I think that's part of the problem is that people just firmly believe that it's [__] and that you just it makes it way less possible for it to happen

you'd have to have a really Advanced
master in front of relatively few people
who can overcome that resistance from
spiritually bankrupt normies
and I hope I haven't just insulted the
people that were saying that psychic
powers don't exist in fact I mean
parapsychology is one of the most
carefully designed it has some of the
most carefully designed experiments of
any branch of science and they have
demonstrated

I mean

they have really demonstrated as well
you can demonstrate anything that there
is like the average person has some
psychic ability

it might be a fraction of one percent
let's say they're they're guessing cards
or coin flips or something
um just a fraction of one percent above
random chance but when you're doing it
thousands of times
that fraction of a percent becomes
statistically significant
and some people do way better than a
fraction of one percent
so I think we're just living in a
spiritually bankrupt a spiritually
comatose age in a spiritually comatose
culture that relies on science and
technology for its magic
but if the Science and Technology are

not there the magic is going to manifest
in other ways

we just have this way that can be sort
of logically rationally understood and
we insist upon our magic for the most
part fitting into that and so we fly in
the air and talk to people thousands of
miles away and so forth but we do it
through Science and Technology but if
the Science and Technology were not
there there'd be other ways for these
abilities to manifest and it might just
be like really Advanced people who are
like cultivating themselves for years
and years wholeheartedly to develop
these abilities but I do think that it
does happen from time to time

so I'll just move on to CEO of action
and c pot Zeta now's next question here
when we look at how religions were in
India in the Buddhist time they seem
like the philosophical schools of
ancient Greek persuasion in many ways
along with their practices Buddhists
Skeptics atomists materialists
annihilationists fatalists Etc even the
brahmanas believed in understanding the
true nature of the self as the ultimate
good however when we see all the modern
Indian religions they have all devolved
to various kinds of devotionalism
whether it is some Cosmic Buddha in
Mahayana the Hindu worshiping Vishnu or

Shiva or whatever the local deity is or even in terravara Buddhism making some convoluted story about how the Buddha will see you praying with his omniscience by looking into the future even the supposed enlightened Hindus today are mostly just going on about devotionalistic practices why do you think the Indian religions in general lost most of their intellectual sophistication even though I know you said the polytechs were written before logic was really developed the ideas in it still seem leagues and Bounds more sophisticated than what most of these Indian gurus Preach Today whether it was the Buddhist ideas or the

ideas of their rival schools well that's
that's an interesting question I don't
think anyone's asked that one before
although it's a valid question
so I mean there still are some
philosophical schools in India it's
like anta for example
which uh is comparable to what was going
on in the Buddhist time but it is true
that Hinduism I mean you had like Vedic
brahmanism that or you know vedism I
guess which eventually evolved into
modern Hinduism
and I think a large part of that was as
Indian philosophy and religion you know
as we know it spread farther south it

was spreading down into a different
ethnicity with different culture you
know it was it was like largely you know
indo-europeans

and like the the descendants of the
Indus Valley Civilization for example
living in the North in the South you had
like tamils you had dravidians mostly I
mean there's lots of dravidians in the
north too but they weren't dominating
the culture in the north the way they
they were in the South and I think the
dravidians were way more passionate and
emotional and devotionalistic in their
approach

so

it was like when Hinduism or

proto-hinduism when Indian philosophy
and religion spread into Southern India
it became more and more devotionalistic
which then kind of
went back into the North and influenced
the North

um but I mean it's a relatively modern
thing and there's like medieval India
was still very philosophical you know
you had all these Buddhist Buddhist
sects and Hindus or proto-hindu sects
maybe still then you know debating each
other and maybe now it's it's all been
subsumed into this one Hinduism that is
very easy going with regard to different
beliefs that maybe they don't have this

rigorous debate you know sharpening
everybody all the time also so I think
part of it is just the effect of
Southern India on Northern India and
also

I do think it may be that there's less
diversity

um partly just through you know survival
of the fittest or whatever you know the
Buddhists all got wiped out by the by
the Muslims

um and Hinduism sort of closed ranks or
something you know they're not so much
inclined to debate with each other
anymore

so

yeah I think that's part of it too

and as I say we're just in a less
spiritually Advanced age than we were
back then it's strange it's like we're
living in an age of like spiritual
mediocrity whereas in the Buddhist time
you had more enlightened beings you also
had more cannibals and mass murderers
and so forth so it was you had a broader
spectrum of the highest and the lowest
and now we're living in just the state
of spiritual mediocrity
so then that would apply to India also
maybe not quite as much as in the west
but I mean the West has pervasive
effects on the entire world now
so that would be I mean it's just sort

of

educated guesses

so I think I have read before some

scholar was saying that that the uh the

devotionalists and this emotional

emotionalism of Southern India did like

significantly affect India after you

know the the northern religious systems

you know spreading just Indian culture

as known today you know spread into

Southern India

so I think I'll uh content myself with

that sort of sketchy explanation and

move on to nearmates question here

and I talked about this a few shows back

I think

um nermit says is it possible that

mahavira and the Buddha were the same person I am asking this because if you recall their life stories they have so many similarities and mahavira was reputedly the founder of Jainism or like the the latest founder of Jainism because they they believe in tonkaras you know sort of like you know fully enlightened Jane's you know like a long lineage of them with mahavira being the latest one I think they might have come up with later ones I really not keeping up on my Jainism lately um you know sort of like in Buddhism you know there's like a series of Buddhas

so they had that idea but

um even in in ancient like in Nepali tax

mahavira and the Buddha were

contemporaries you know they met and

spoke to each other

mahavira is called niganta nataputa

and the chains were called nigantas

which means without bonds or without

ties

and not to Puta I'm pretty sure is like

a joke name it's sort of like a

propagandist name which means something

like son of grandson

and uh I'm pretty sure that mahavira he

really existed but the thing is like I

explained before that the jains were

much more ascetic than the Buddhists the

jains were much more likely to just own nothing and wander around some of them wandering around naked you know in in the cold season when it gets like freezing cold you can actually die of hypothermia they just smear themselves with mud as a kind of insulation and uh they had much way fewer Scholars and so what happened was you had insufficient numbers of Jain monks memorizing the text because texts weren't written down in India in those days

whereas the Buddhists you know there are there are more scholarly Buddhists that weren't so much into the asceticism

thing so they would just memorize texts and chant texts and you know teach it to others and so forth whereas the the James were much less likely to do that and so twice in their history they lost their texts and so they had to have like emergency

convocations to come together and Salvage as much information from their lost texts because the people that had memorized them had died out and no new ones had shown up you know you had to get bits and pieces and fill in the blanks and so forth and I think one of the blanks they filled in was mahavira's biography because they pretty obviously took that from the Buddha's you know

legendary biography you know he's the he
was of the shatria cast and he was you
know a prince and you know renounced the
world in a dramatic way although he
didn't shave his head and beard mahavira
didn't he just pulled them out and I
think it was like five handfuls
which must have hurt
and that you know they went through all
the asceticism stuff it was very similar
and uh either mahavira's legendary
biography is copied from the Buddhist
you know the go to my Buddha's legendary
biography or I mean it's also
theoretically possible that they're both
copying from an earlier Source although

I would guess that because the Jane's
lost their their body of tax twice uh
and just had to salvage what they could
and fill in the blanks as best they
could that they just copied the the life
story of godomabuto
with regard to his his younger years
before the great renunciation before his
enlightenment
but I mean he is mahavira is mentioned
in the text apparently I mean he was a
contemporary of the boat he was older
than the Buddha
but um they both lived at the same time
so we'll just move on to the next
question this is from Saint sword or
Saints word I still haven't figured that

one out

and this I mean it's I think I don't
know if he did this he was the one who
did this last time

but he gave this really long kind of
commentary to my answer to his question
or questions and uh there is actually a
question at the end here there is a
question mark to this but it's it's uh
it's going in a different direction but
I would just kind of like to address
this just because you know it is a long
comment with regard to a question and an
answer

um under a q a video so

I'm doing it it's my show I can do it if

I want to

so Saint sword or Saints word says

okay responding to your response to my

emptiness nothingness discussion I'm

trying to understand nibana with all of

this

danger danger I suspect nibana is

something far more profound than

nothingness the first three are

rupajamas do involve perception of one

of the qualities of nothingness

you are perceiving either Infinite Space

infinite Consciousness or infinite

nothingness what I mean is that

perception is not active only when you

get it neither when you get to neither

perception or non-perception and he

wrote a samopathy I'm leaving anidas and nibana alone for a minute since there's so many questions there so I think to say that making nothingness into an object means it's not nothingness anymore is incorrect you're perceiving nothingness in these states and perception is always intentional toward an object just a very subtle one in this case another approach is to note that when Yana the aggregate is still active in all the arupa janas and according to Diga nikaya 15 when Yana and namarupa are codependent therefore in these arupa janasupa must both be active if we nyana is active since these are the arupa

janas clearly Rupa is not active

therefore Nama must be active what Nama

is active question another question mark

what Nama is active the mental object of

a rhetorical question the mental object

of nothingness there's no other choice

so there's no separation between the

idea of nothingness and nothingness

itself in this case that nothingness is

still Nama the idea of nothingness as

you're referring to it is like the set

that only contains zero but the actual

arupa genre is like the empty set but in

either case there's still an idea or set

and therefore objects only with nibana

and the Rhoda samapati is when Yana not

active nibana is the blowing out of

winyana the blowing out of the set
entirely it's not the empty set
okay this is really long again my
apologies it's an interesting discussion
to me I've spent a lot of time trying to
understand some experiences I had many
years ago don't worry about me thinking
about this too much I also mentioned I
also meditate three hours a day LOL so I
got the practice going on too and then
before he gets to the actual question I
would just like to comment on this a
little bit
so
let's see I suspect nothing nibana is
something far more profound than

nothingness I agree I do not consider
Nirvana to be zero or just
annihilation

so the first pajamas this is this is him
reading this is him saying this again
the first three Europa genas do involve
a perception of one of the qualities of
nothingness well I mean we're already
this is already getting weird because
nothingness should have no qualities
see it's like to attribute qualities to
something you have to have a something
and by definition nothingness is not a
something

I mean it's not an object because to
have an object there has to be something
there to be the object and nothingness

doesn't exist or at least real true
nothingness

it it doesn't exist you know it's not a
thing it's not an object it's not a
state

because you can call it a state and
think about it as a state but then it's
just a perception it's this it's this
mental construct of nothingness which
isn't really nothingness

so you are perceiving either Infinite
Space and nothingness really I mean
I mean you could call it Infinite Space
but then the space you're perceiving it
as a something see you're reifying
emptiness

and by reifying emptiness it's not
emptiness anymore

so infinite Consciousness obviously by
definition that wouldn't be nothing or
infinite nothingness

what I mean is that perception is not
active only when you get to neither
perception or non-perception well even I
mean neither perception nor
non-perception is as high as mentality
can go

because it's right at the verge of
perception

so you can't say that there's no
perception see right here what I meant
what I mean is that perception is not
active only when you get to neither

perception or non-perception well by the
very name of this state

it's not saying that perception is not
active because it's neither perception
nor non-perception so it's just this
so subtle that you can't put your finger
on it

so maybe nerota some Opera which is you
know it's a state of suspended animation
like Beyond a hibernating squirrel which
doesn't go back to the earliest texts
see all right so I think that by making
up so he says here so I think to say
that making nothingness into an object
means it's not nothingness anymore is
incorrect but yeah I mean I don't

understand it's it seems like

Saint sword here is just stuck in his
thoughts

that he can't differentiate

like the the perception of a thing with
the thing itself

I mean that's that's that's it's the way
it seems to me

because nothingness can't be an object

because an object has to be an IT and

nothingness by definition isn't an it

there's no it there there's nothing

there if you turn the nothingness itself

into an it what you've got is an idea

you've got an idea of nothingness you

cannot perceive nothingness because it

would just be empty perception

and maybe seeing sort of saying you can
have an empty perception but there has
to be a perception of something
and if you turn nothingness into a
something it's not nothingness anymore
it's a something now
so

I think there's there's different kinds
of nothing and this might be the part of
the sticking points you know it's just
as there's different kinds of infinity
like like the number of integers is
infinite right the number of even
integers is also infinite although you
know intuitively you would assume that
there's twice as many integers as just

even integers because there'd be an equal amount of odd integers but still somehow they're both infinite or you take a euclidean plane it's infinite you cut it in half the area of that half plane is still infinite even though it's obviously half of what you started with and the zero was the same way I mean it's like you got the number zero which just represents you know an it's an integer oh it's a whole number so

um you know there's just different kinds of infinity

which I mean absolute Infinity would just be pure being

and then there'd be like different kinds

of nothing or zero and but the ultimate
is just absolute nothing would just be
pure non-being and as Hegel says in his
at the beginning of his logic they just
merge into each other and are
indistinguishable

so okay here arupa John is here is
referring to formless meditations
so

according to let's see another approach
to note that when Yana the aggregate is
still active in all the Aruba Johns yeah
and and and according to Orthodox
caravana like abhidham you can't have
the aggregate of Consciousness without
perception there has to be some kind of

perception even the realm of neither
perception or non-perception the
perception is just so subtle you can't
say it's there and you can't say it's
not there either

so it's getting into the paradoxical
realm because once you get to Infinity
it's it's just paradox

so let's see

okay

yeah Nama is active what Nama is active
the mental object of nothingness well
it's a mental object but it's not the
actual nothingness

that's that's where we're disagreeing I
guess

so

he says so there's no separation between
the idea of nothingness and nothingness
itself in this case

but no I tell you there's just like this
radical just Quantum difference between
any idea of anything and the actual
reality it's like Kant again the thing
is it really is the thing in itself has
this unbridgeable gap to perception
because perception is
symbolic it's just turning a symbol like
an arbitrary symbol in maybe all cases
and just saying you know like there's
some tree out there out there let's just
say for the sake of argument there's a
tree in Ultimate Reality

and you know the thing in itself of that
tree but I mean any idea we have about
that tree is going to be just infinitely
different from that the tree as it
really is

because I mean they just cannot touch
each other you know the kantian thing as
it seems is never going to even approach
the kantian thing as it really is the
thing in itself

so

I guess well if I mean he can he can
continue to to disagree or whatever
that's fine I'm not insisting only this
is true anything else is wrong
because only fools do that

so

nibana is the blowing out of winyana

so yeah it's

yeah I'm not exactly sure that that's

that's necessarily the case either

nibbona would be the blowing out of

mentality it'd be possibly the blowing

out of mental States or at least the

rendering of mental States as irrelevant

because they are no longer like the

object they're no longer perceived as

mental States

but I mean I might have to put the Fez

back on to get any farther with that so

I think I'll just move on to uh Saint

swords uh actual question here not the

rhetorical one and that is by the way

have you ever heard of Bernadette
Roberts she's a former Carmelite nun who
I suspect was a full Aura hunt she died
just a few years ago the experience of
no self is probably her most famous book
and this is an easy question to answer
because I do not recall ever having
heard of Bernadette Roberts
so yeah I would not be
completely flabbergasted if a Carmelite
none was fully enlightened
so I mean they are a contemplative sect
he probably meditated a lot
so I think I'll just move on to the next
question here and this is from Edelweiss
Voyager and Edelweiss Voyager says do
you feel that pure land Buddhism should

be completely shunned or is it
acceptable to pray to the mythological
Buddhas
mythological Buddhas he says if one is
able to do so in a non-spiritually
materialist way I understand that this
is not an orthodox teaching of shakimuni
Buddha but I feel like if his Holiness
was teaching to a 21st century
rationalist post-enlightenment
Anglo-Saxon audience his teachings may
have been different you sound frustrated
every time you talk about pure land
and don't feel pressured to answer this
if you do not want to
well I mean it is true I think it's it's

likely let's say that if go to mabuto
were alive today you know he'd be
teaching things differently like he
wouldn't be going with ancient Indian
cosmology probably ancient Indian just
tradition

that he'd be going with whatever
tradition he happened to be in because
you know the outward form of a Buddha is
still going to be a product of his of
his culture

so I so nevertheless I mean let's see
right here

um if his Holiness was teaching to a
21st century rationalist
post-enlightenment Anglo-Saxon audience
he's still not going to be teaching

mythological Buddhas I mean it's like
don't pay attention to me you know don't
let me help you get enlightened pray to
this other Buddha who is in this other
dimension or this other world
and pray to be born and I mean just
ignore what I'm telling you about how
you shouldn't try to get enlightened in
this life instead pray to this this
mythological or you know this Buddha you
can't see even though I'm standing here
right in front of you don't don't pay
attention pray to this other one that
you can't see on the just assuming that
he's real enough that you can be reborn
into his pure land and then he'll help

you get in line I mean it just doesn't
make sense

not to me anyway

so pure land Buddhism I mean it

shouldn't be completely shunned I mean

you can study it for anthropological

purposes you want to see the weird

directions that Buddhism has evolved and

from what I've seen pure land Buddhism

still has some some genuine like

morality to it so that's good

but

I mean why pray to a mythological Buddha

of it

and there's I mean it seems to me that

they were just made up I mean maybe

they're egregores like we were talking

about earlier

I mean that would be your best bet that

amitaba Buddha

has been believed in so much by so many

people that he is now kind of existing

as an egregor

but a genuine Buddha you can't even say

whether they exist or not whether you

know even if they're standing there in

front of you

so

yeah I really don't think that

it would be

in a a Buddhist person's best interests

to sideline the actual historical Buddha

in favor of mythological ones that

nobody had ever heard of until hundreds
of years after the death of gota mabuna
so

so I'm kind of surprised that he says I
seem frustrated every time I talk about
purely

I guess I I did get kind of worked up on
that one but to me yeah it is true I
mean I consider pure land Buddhism to be
like a grotesque aberration from from
genuine dhamma in in many respects not
all respects I mean in some respects
it's essentially the opposite of what
the Buddha was teaching so in that case
if you really want to follow what the
Buddha taught not not some you know
Cosmic Buddha in some other dimension

but you know like the Buddha that was
born on this planet
then yeah you'd do better to to study
the oldest text and try to find you know
as much authentic material as you can
and follow that I mean it's just like a
rational like empirical audience of 21st
century Anglo-Saxons I mean they're
obviously going to want something more
objective than like pure Legend with no
actual facts backing it up other than
people's convictions
because I mean the Jehovah's Witnesses
have convictions too
but just because they believe something
doesn't mean that's necessarily true

unless Jehovah's an aggregator

so I'll just move on to the next

question here this is also from

Edelweiss Voyager so Edelweiss voyager's

last question in fact he says here this

is my last question

I have recently seen anata translated as

not self rather than no self this

translation is used to argue for the

existence of a permanent Soul it seems

like people who follow this translation

Wikipedia gives the example of Richard

gombridge and Alexander Winn are just

not capable of understanding codependent

origination I do however think that

allowing this minor mistranslation to

spread would be helpful in spreading

Buddhism to normies and nietzscheens
what are your thoughts on this thank you
so much for taking the time to answer
all of our questions
well he seems to be asking
um if we can just get rid of the anata
stuff of no of no self and say well
there is a self it's just the five
condas are not ourselves that we have
the soul you know this Immortal soul
that that might serve Buddhism in some
way although in a way it's you know it's
perverting dhamma it's misrepresenting
the Buddha in my opinion and uh anjan
tanisaro who is quite Orthodox in most
respects as far as I know

um he also prefers

I think it's not self to no self in that
you know he also goes with the idea of
the five Aggregates are not self but
kind of leaving the door open to maybe
something else that is self although
um the texts do claim that the five
Aggregates are pretty much are
essentially the cosmos

so

so yeah I don't think that you should
deliberately misrepresent the Buddha in
order to get more converts
that I mean people who have little dust
in their eyes are always going to form a
small minority and if you get Buddhism
you know sort of like what happened with

Christianity or to some degree Buddhism
in in the East where you get everybody a
Buddhist you're gonna have lots and lots
of Fools and and just bad people and
just stupid people I mean nothing wrong
being simple but still you're gonna have
just like raging fools

as as Buddhists and there's always going
to be a certain amount of raging fools
as Buddhists but I mean you don't want
to just just invite everybody in
so

yeah Richard gumbridge he has he had
some weird ideas he was saying that just
meta meditation can get you enlightened
and so forth

um I do think he wasn't he was not a
Buddhist I'm pretty sure
and uh I do think that he was he he was
like this Oxbridge academic type who
really

I mean he was just I mean if you're an
Oxford academic type or at least in his
generation you know you're gonna have
you have lots of Church of England in
you or some kind of Christianity you're
gonna have a Christian wife probably and
they're going to be very much influenced
by their own cultural conditioning
because an Oxbridge academic has little
choice but to consider his cultural
conditioning to be the best
it just seems to be my experience

or if not his cultural conditioning are the best then his judgment is the best because uh I guess ajan Brahm is an Oxbridge graduate and I mean he's I mean to some degree he's kind of uh following his cultural conditioning but uh I mean as an ordained monk is not as much as gomrich and gomrich I should say was uh I think he was an Oxford professor of Buddhist studies he was a professor at Sanskrit and also he was president of the Polytech Society for a while

so

yeah I don't think you should try to deliberately distort Buddhism in order

to get more converts I mean that that
just kills a religion I mean look what
look at what's happening with Protestant
Christianity now or even Catholicism
with their their rainbow Pope
so

yeah you're better off just just letting
it be a relatively uh exclusive group of
you know like a minority movement
so long as it's allowed as long as it's
not like persecuted or something

so we'll just move on to the next

question here and this is from Nathan

I'm gonna check the time here wow this

is going fast it's only been an hour and
a half

so this question from Nathan and Nathan

says if we have been in samsara for an infinite period of time then how have we not become enlightened yet the only explanation I can think of for this dilemma is that perhaps Enlightenment itself is the only event which is beyond the infinite samsaric experiences we've been undergoing since beginning with time but if this were the case then Enlightenment itself would be seemingly Beyond causation which might violate padice

question mark well I mean this is a problem not only for terrible it's an even bigger problem for Mahayana because Mahayana Buddhists take bodhisattva

vowels where they vow to save all beings
before they become enlightened or allow
themselves to enter you know final
Nirvana and I mean the universe has been
here for an infinite amount of time
already so there's already been an
infinite amount of time elapsed and we
still have apparently an infinite number
of unenlightened suffering beings which
would seem to indicate logically
there's never
there I mean there's always going to be
an infinite number of suffering beings
and and there's there's different ways
of accounting for this I mean one
account is that
um in an infinite Universe anything that

can happen does happen

and you know it's like my my Theory of
Everything Is the uncarved block where
you've got this just

um

what's the word

having a block that's kind of a joke
there

um

this uh

an analogy okay an analogy you've got
this block of stone and inside this
block of stone I mean and it doesn't
have anything around it to compare it
with so the size is
just consider it sizeless because you

got nothing to compare it with anyway
so you got this block of stone and
inside that block of stone is contained
every possible statue

I mean every single molecule of every
you know every bit of that statue is
already there you just gotta dismiss the
extraneous Rock and there's every
possible statue and an infinite number
of impossible statues too you know
you've got Myron's discus thrower with
legs as thin as hairs that couldn't
really stand up on its own but it's
still in that in that block of stone so
if you think about samsara that way
I mean when you become enlightened
you're just transcending all these

imaginary potential statues that really
are in there in a sense but they're
virtual their their potential but it's
it's really there in a sense
so when you become enlightened you just
transcend all the statues and you're
just

you just merge with a block of stone as
as a as a whole you know you can you've
got you've merged with infinity
essentially

so in a case like that there's always
going to be an infinite number of
suffering beings because they are
possible

so another I mean that's if you reject

that that's fine so let's just go with
another another hypothesis is that we
haven't been here forever that the
universe is churning out new beings all
the time

you know sort of like it's creating new
stars in a way and one way that I've
I've discussed the possibility of this
before

um that I've there's a couple
possibility possibilities that I've read
in this weird book called Seth speaks
one is that the karmic momentum of an
individual being can split
and then you've got two smaller beings
so I mean that could be a way of like
um you know suffering beings reproducing

themselves you know sort of
metaphysically in in the karmic sense
and another one is that when you dream
at night or just in your imagination you
think about people that don't really
exist but like in your dream you dream
about some person
and they continue to I mean you've given
birth to this being they've got like
this very shady very ephemeral sort of
you know even below ghost-like level of
existence but still they exist and then
they start their own
their own trajectory you know their own
you know Evolution or series of births
or whatever and then another possibility

is like what the jains believe and I think maybe some Hindus believe this also is that

um that a being begins at this Elemental level you know like a crystal or something and then

I mean you'd have like this simplest form of karmic existence that can form spontaneously sort of like organic life had to form spontaneously somehow or other

um so that's that's a possibility too but yeah it's it does seem uh pretty gloomy if you think that you know

they're an infinite number of suffering beings supposedly although according to Buddhism none of them really exists none

of them is ultimately real

at least according to terravonna

Buddhism

so that's that's one reason or one one

thing you can think of and I think I

read this in a Mahayana text it was the

Sutra point I think where he says that

when you become enlightened you look

around you see that everybody else is

enlightened too

so that would be good news from a high

honest sort of in that the the only way

to liberate all beings is to become

enlightened to the point that you

realize that all these suffering beings

don't really exist anyway there's nobody

to liberate

but I'm getting a little too

metaphysical here

so

um

it is something that he says here in

this is uh

let's see I can think of the the only

explanation I can think of in this

dilemma is that perhaps Enlightenment

itself is the only event which is beyond

the infinite samsaric experiences we've

been undergoing since beginning this

time and some Mahayana Buddhism does

teach this that there is Enlightenment

but there's no moment of Enlightenment

um there's nobody who becomes

enlightened the whole thing is a paradox
again

so Enlightenment itself would seemingly
be Beyond causation well nibana is
beyond causation I mean if nibana had a
cause then it would be conditioned by
that cause and it would be impermanent
and suffering

so yeah that's that's another thing I
mean nibana has no cause

if it did have a cause it would be a
condition thing it would be a Sankara it
would not be

um nibana

so yeah welcome to the Paradox Club it's
it's all paradoxical once you get into

the realm of infinity or the absolute

I mean you're just going to be wallowing in Paradox unless you just

you're just not sensitive to the existence of paradoxes you just don't want to see them

so we'll just move on to Nathan's next question here do you think the Buddha actually thought oh do you think the Buddha actually taught the five

Aggregates as such I've been skimming through GC pandey's studies thanks for the recommendation and he is convinced that the condos were a later development however Pandey further argues that the Buddha originally taught a simpler schematic of Kaya and wenyana with

winyana as the Atta

this seems to betray his Hindu

conditioning more than anything but I

agree with him that the five condas feel

a bit questionable if I had to make a

guess I'd say the recursive

interrelation of namarupa and winyana

such as in the mahani dhanasuta is

probably closer to how the Buddha

actually talked about subjective human

experiences but who knows uh yeah GC

Pandey

who wrote studies in the origins of

Buddhism he was a Hindu and he did have

sort of a Hindu take on Buddhism I mean

his book is well worth reading it's it's

really good but you have to sort of Bear
in mind that he is going to be leaning
towards a like a vedantist
interpretation of Buddhism
but I guess I should for those of you
who are sort of uh beginners I guess I
guess I should uh Define some of these
terms he's using a lot of of poly in
here the the condos are the Aggregates
they're the five Aggregates of which a
human being is composed according to
Orthodox teravana Buddhist philosophy
and it's rubikonda or the the aggregate
of form then you've got
wait in that conda or the aggregate
feeling or feelings you've got
um Sanya Kanda the aggregated perception

you've got Sankara Kanda the aggregate
of karma formations
which mainly means cheating out or
volition and then you've got Wayne
Anaconda is the the the aggregate of
Consciousness and that that is what a
human being is composed of
and uh kayak means body when Yana is
consciousness and it says here that the
Buddha originally taught a simpler
schematic of Kaya and winyana with
winyana as the Atta and Atta means self
but if I recall it seems like he was
talking about this mind and body that
the Buddha or GC Pandey was saying that
in the oldest text or what appeared to

be the oldest texts the Buddha isn't
talking about the five condas or the
five Aggregates he's just talking about
no

like mind and body

so I mean none of that would be the self
so let's see here

yeah I mean especially if you consider
the the Orthodox development of the five
condas like according to abidama and the
um commentarial system

you've got rubicondo that's that's
physical matter the body itself and then
you've got you've got 52 mental States
all right you've got Rupa is ultimately
real Consciousness or mind is ultimately
real and then you've got 52 ultimately

real mental states with Wadena Kanda being one of those 52 Sanya Kanda as being another one of those 52 and the remaining 50 are all lumped together in Sankara Kanda which is like not good logic it's not good system and personally I'm rather skeptical of it I think on the older method of just saying that Sankara Kanda is volition or children or will is is better and you just get rid of the extra 49 mental states which includes things like wrong view as an ultimately real mental state I mean I'm sorry that I'll be dumb I even exist to tell you the truth I mean you you can get benefit from studying it

just to become literate in what the Orthodox tradition asserts but like venerable nyanovira not the new famous yanovira but the older famous nyanovira who lived in Ceylon back in the 50s and 60s

he said the less abidama you know the better because the less you have to unlearn in order to really understand dama but I'm kind of skeptical that he really understood it either

so let's see

yeah I'm I'm kind of questionable about the whole five condas

um going all the way back to the Buddha himself so I would agree with GC Pandey on that and so now I'll just move on to

the next question and this is from

cheers Alex's

he had an easy name to pronounce and I'm

not pronouncing it correctly now but I'm

at least I've settled on like a

standardized pronunciation for this

and true zoixes says according to the

polycanon did the Buddha ever make

derogatory remarks about dark skin

wait a minute

okay I got that wrong this is I

that's wrong he didn't he didn't ask

that because Alexis didn't ask that

question

I'm going to type the right question

because I remember this one this is a

weird question

is your

your favorite

species of crab

okay so what your Zao exist says what is

your favorite species of crab

and that's

I mean I've told a story about a crab

maybe in the last q a

and I believe it was a it was a Tanner

crab of the genus clan of cities

which in restaurants is called snow crab

but what is my favorite species of crab

I mean that's weird

and I'm not exactly sure what he has in

mind here I mean uh

with regard to eating crap I would guess

maybe uh king crab some kind of Alaskan
king crab and there's uh
there's like four different species
at least of Alaskan king crab and I
unfortunately I'm Rusty in my Bering Sea
Marine Biology Marine biological
taxonomy and so
I don't even remember the genus of king
crabs
um with regard to species of crab the
species of which I still recall cancer
Magister is nice it's the Dungeness crab
of the Pacific coast
um but with regard to crabs that I've
been uh familiar with that I became
struck up a friendship with I used to

have some pet hermit crabs land hermit crabs

so I don't know those are the ones that that I had the most affection for I guess

and one interesting point

while I'm mentioning crabs and king crabs and hermit crabs it is apparent that the king crab of the Bering Sea you know the the luxury food item that gets really big

that uh they are evolved from hermit crabs and one of the reasons they know this is that if you pull open the flap you know a crab has got its oh I did it again

the computer is telling me that the

battery's running loud because I always
forget

to plug in this battery just a second

I forget to plug in the computer

it's not even funny

ah

okay

okay

ah where was it oh yeah

king crabs okay so a crab

is essentially like a shrimp except it's

its tail is folded up underneath it and

it's flat and it it keeps its eggs and

so forth in there and if you pull that

flap out you see that the little legs

that are inside there are asymmetrical

you know they're they're bigger on one side than on the other side on the under the flap of a king crab and they're asymmetrical because their ancestors were hermit crabs and hermit crab has to have asymmetrical little legs on the back of its body to hold it into a spirally curved snail shell so because the snail shell is like in a spiral going this way it has to have bigger legs on one side and smaller legs on the other side to hold it in there again so that's enough of uh the marine biology lesson for today and so trezalex is is uh I mean I'm sorry I really don't technically have a favorite species of crab and I could

could just be this weird personality

Quirk of mine that I do not have a

favorite species of crab

so Tres Alex is his next question here

is

do you have a bug out bag

and then in parentheses he calls it an

evacuation bag

and uh I'm I have to admit I am not a

prepper

so

there's there's this my sweetheart

watches this guy he's a prepper in South

Carolina and I would not want to hang

out with this guy because I mean he's

just always on the lookout for threats

to his family's survival and like you
know he's he does these videos how you
you get these concrete picnic benches
these are good because in the case of of
an emergency you can tip the concrete
picnic bench on its side and and hide
behind it with your rifle
you know this kind of stuff and it's man
he would not be a fun person to hang out
with because he's just like always like
on on yellow alert at least
so I mean my my bug out bag would
probably be a Glock
and some some clips of ammo I don't know
I was I was a monk for so long it's like
um I mean everything you own supposedly
you should just be able to carry with

you you know he's I'm just kind of a minimalist still

I just don't think in those terms even though I now have a a family do to take care of

but I guess the easy answer for that for cheers Alex is this question there is no I do not have a bug out bag

I mean we don't even have extra water bottles

stored in the basement or anything like that

so I mean when the [__] hits the fan don't attack our house and try and steal our survival stuff because we don't have any

that's the moral of that story so I'll just move on to the next question here and this is from vegan Samurai and uh vegan Samurai says have you ever heard of Yukio Mishima he was a renowned Japanese author playwright poet and actor he is considered one of the most important Japanese authors of the 20th century and was nominated three times for the Nobel Prize in literature Mishima was also a prominent figure in Japanese Society known for his Nationalist and traditionalist Views as well as his interest in bodybuilding and martial arts in 1970 Mishima committed ritual suicide by seppuku also known as harakiri after leading a failed military

coup in an attempt to restore power to
the Japanese emperor

so the question here is have I ever
heard

of Yukio Mishima and

maybe I mean I've heard of a lot of
people and then it just doesn't register
sufficiently that I can say oh yeah I

was I was riding a bus

and somebody sitting next to me is

wearing a tweed jacket and he was

smoking a cigar and he was telling no I

don't remember any of that so maybe I've

heard of them but almost everything I

know about Yukio Mishima is contained in

this question

so sorry about that
just got a notice on the computer
so finally the very last question
and this is also from vegan Samurai
vegan Samurai asks according to the
Polly Canon did the Buddha ever make
derogatory remarks about dark skin
and I do not recall the Buddha ever
making derogatory comments about dark
skin although there are kind of sort of
derogatory comments about dark skin in
the texts simply because it was a
cultural thing for example I think it
was it was one of the two main kings in
the Buddhist time Sania
see
vicinity King vicinity or King bimbisara

I can't remember which I think yeah I don't I don't remember which but his favorite wife was dark-skinned and it was considered sort of a joke or something you know sort of not not exactly a scandal but you know he was very devoted to his wife who had dark skin and so that was It was kind of an issue

and I I don't remember if the Buddha was even talking about it much but I mean there is a rule in the rules of monastic discipline that you should not ordain a candidate for the monkhood if his skin is very dark but you also are not supposed to ordain a candidate for

monkhood if his skin is very light
this and the reason for that is just
if he stands out as being kind of weird
looking just like really standing out as
distort something that people would be
talking about at home after he walks by
yeah did you see that monk see how weird
he looked that kind of a thing
um they were trying to avoid that sort
of thing so it was even a monk with a
unibrow is not like a person with a
unibrow is not supposed to be ordained
so I mean there is that
but I think mainly you'd be likely to
find in the polytext not the Buddha
making derogatory marks about dark skin
I mean the only person the Buddha would

make derogatory remarks about would be a foolish person

regardless of skin color regardless of what what cast they were born in any of that regardless even of their religion I mean you know he would call out Buddhist fools as quickly as he'd call out like Jane fools for example so the Buddha did not make derogatory comments about anybody other than just you know foolish people including bad people and he would just call them on him and he wouldn't be making you know jokes about them or anything but in Ancient India especially Northern India

um

it was fair skin was an upper class kind of a thing it it still is I mean there's different reasons for it now back then the upper class had fair skin partly because the upper classes had more indo-aryan ancestry whereas the Aboriginal peoples that were already in India when the indo-aryans invaded or more dark skin like like uh South Indians and so it was considered to be you know better to be fair-skinned in Ancient India in Northern ancient India because it showed more of a high class uh ancestry

but also and even nowadays in third world countries if you have fair skin that means you're not working out in the sun getting burnt in Black every day I mean it means that you have high enough social status that you don't have to be a manual laborer out in the burning Sun so School teachers educated people shop owners you know they cultivate you know even like a pasty you know they just light as the light of skin as they can manage because fair skin um is like a a status symbol you know it's it indicates social status so some acknowledgment of that is probably to be found in the Texas which is one reason

why you know people were kind of making
fun of the fact that this King's
favorite wife had dark skin you know
it's just acknowledging what was going
on in the culture at the time but
there's no promotion of derogatory
remarks about dark skin
not that I that I can think of
and the Buddha would not be bad-mouthing
anybody other than people that were
considered to be fools
so that's the last question and so
by golly
we are done
so if you have any questions feel free
to ask in the comments below if you have
access to my subscribe star you can ask

them there if you have access to the
Discord server you can ask them there
and feel free to like And subscribe if
you haven't already and look at the URL
links below

and be happy

hi it's me again

um I did the whole q a and then I did
two videos with Brian Rue

and uh then I realized that I forgot to
answer a question so I'm back again to
answer the one more question

and this is from Jules and Jewel says

what is the etymological root of the

word duka I think the prefix do is bad

what about the Ka

well

there are differences of opinion on the
etymology of the word Duca because it's
not like an ordinary kind of word

um one commentarial

etymology

which is traditional

is that the do means bad or difficult
and the Ka comes from the verb comedy

which means acceptance

um for forbearance like also uh the noun

Kanti would have the same

etymology which is

k-h-a-n-t-i or comedy would be

k-h-a-m-a-t-i I think

so the this commentarial explanation is
that the do means hard or difficult and

the cut comes from Comedy to accept and
so it means hard to accept what is
dukkha is hard to accept although
modern philologists tend not to accept
that

etymology

so I've read in uh I did a little study
on the official like etymologies of the
word dukkha in in this book here which
is the the Polytech Society
um poly English dictionary which I spent
a long time adding to you can see in the
margins I got all this extra stuff added
see see all this extra stuff also the
book is like that
so anyway according to uh

twist Davids and William Steed who wrote
this dictionary

the main probable etymology by modern
Western standards is that the do means
bad and the cop is a modification of
just the suffix Ka in poly which doesn't
mean much of anything sort of like the
word for one in poly is a cop like eka
and the actual

proto-indo-european root for the number
one is manifested just in the E of a cop
with the the KA at the end just

I mean it doesn't really have any
meaning uh sometimes it can be used in a
derogatory sense or or a diminutive like
a Samana is like a philosopher an
ascetic philosopher a samanica is sort

of like a a derogatory you know sort of
like a so-called philosopher but here it
doesn't really mean much of anything
it's just sort of turning the Dew into a
noun is turning a prefix which means bad
into a noun that just sort of implies
Badness and also there is sort of a a
modification of it with the the kha
um to make it sort of uh
a bookend I mean what's the word like a
compliment of the word sukha
which means like
Pleasant or or
um
ease I usually I usually Define uh like
if I'm doing a translation I calls and

duka Anis so you know they sound kind of similar in English as well as in Paulie so that's uh I think the official definition at least at the time that Nepali Tech Society uh dictionary was composed is that it's

do it just means bad the car is is almost like a meaningless suffix to turn the prefix into a whole word and then the the extra H was added you know the the K was changed to KH just for the sake of making it sort of mirror the the already existing word sukkah which is like um like happiness or or ease or that sort of thing

so that's the that's the last that's the
real last question

last time I said it was the last
question I was I was mistaken this is
the last question

so uh be happy

hello and welcome to episode 55 of
question and answer I am your host Ponyo
Bahasa

and we're experimenting with a new
camera now it was a uh one of one of you
interrogators generously donated 50
bucks to the purchase of a new video
camera partly because or maybe entirely
because

um a few episodes back I went blurry
part way through the video and would not
unblurify no matter what I did
that is to I would not undergo
unblurification
in accordance with the principles of
unblurificationism

and so he generously donated to uh help
me get a new camera which is what I'm
using now but the thing is it's not
connecting to the app yet
the the app where you can make
adjustments and so forth so we'll just
see how I end up looking if I look
completely funny or something
that means that it's it's working
so

I just made some hummingbird juice
and I tend to do a few other things
and so I'm ready to answer questions and
we have had I mean it's just kind of
amazing to me that that we're up to
number 55 I mean if you take 55 episodes
and you multiply by 30 which is about

the average number of questions I mean
you get like six billion questions I
didn't that's just off the top of my
head I didn't use a calculator for that
um although it is true that some people
ask the same questions that I've already
answered before which in a way is good
because that means it's a question that
people want to know the answer to and
it's good to repeat myself but also it's
bad because it indicates that people are
not watching all of the previous q and
A's before they get to this one
so I don't know what to do about that
other than just uh berate you
mercilessly

an opposite of my sweet tea
and start answering questions and the
first one is from Edelweiss Voyager
and he asked this question like more
than a week ago and for some reason it
just didn't wind up on the list there
was a glitch in my programming while
while compiling the list and it just
didn't work so here it is he's number
one now add a little advice of Voyager
says

can you enlighten me on Buddhist
opposition to the Vietnam War obviously
non-violence is a principle that we hold
but it seems that defeating communism is
important enough to put aside pacifism
Buddhists in Vietnam are now heavily

surveilled if I am being heretical here
this would be one of the hardest
teachings to accept

well I'm really not familiar with what
was going on with Buddhists during the
Vietnam era that's a bit before my time
um obviously there was some protesting
going on like the famous Vietnamese monk
who lit himself on fire and uh I think
the person who photographed him instead
of putting him out got a Pulitzer Prize
for that I'm pretty sure

um

so it seemed to me that the main
protesting at that time among the the
Buddhists in Vietnam

was not so much against the violence but
against uh Catholics in in that were
ruling the country you know they were
like Francophile Catholics they
converted to Roman Catholicism and they
were running the country instead of
Buddhists

um

so yeah I mean I'm not familiar with
like self-professed Buddhists in the
west protesting against the Vietnam War
I was just like a hippie thing I guess I
mean probably some of the hippies were
Buddhists but I think it was mainly
because they were hippies rather than
because they were Buddhists or maybe it
was just a combination of the two

um but I guess the main question here is not so much historical as just the uh you know what should um a good Buddhists do when Communists are taking over the country or invading or whatever and uh well a monk I mean I mean if you're like top level Buddhist practitioner then yeah I mean you're not going to be killing people deliberately and you should try to avoid killing them even accidentally but uh lay people I mean you're gonna have all kinds of of lay people just different levels of Buddhist even among the Buddhist light people forgetting the

the non-boottest ones I mean you're gonna have just really some that are relatively crude beginning level you get more and more advanced ones some of the top Advanced ones are more advanced than some of the monks

in fact most of the Buddhist lay people would be more advanced in like the the worst few monks in the Sangha

so I mean you're gonna have people that profess Buddhism that are still willing to fight and then you can have other

Buddhists who are just so strict and puritanical so to speak maybe

puritanical has too many negative

connotations but I mean they're just not even going to swat a fly no matter what

they'd rather die than SWAT a mosquito
I've met a few that were like that
there was an Australian monk I Used to
Know who lived at Palm Doyle which is
very strict in in civilian practice as
meditation centers go
and it was infested with bed bugs and so
they had exterminators going around
fumigating the meditation cabins and
almost all of them including the Abbot
himself allowed it to happen but this
Australian monk he would just fiercely
defiant and would not let them kill his
bed bugs because killing is wrong
especially at a Buddhist Monastery and
so forth I mean it just makes it seem

more wrong anyway

so let's see so there's just always

going to be people who are willing to

fight unless they just get so

emasculated and decadent which is kind

of what the globalist West is shooting

for that they just can't be dangerous

even if they want to or they just can't

want to or something

and uh yeah I mean

a situation like that you would think in

a way from a Buddhist point of view that

it would be like a Buddhist Utopia where

nobody even dreams of committing acts

of violence but at the same time

I think Jordan Peterson was correct when

he said

I mean you should be able to be a
monster and then just not be one which
means you're still strong
but you restrain yourself through moral
principles and so forth through through
conscience or whatever and
it's that's not good enough for the the
spiritually bankrupt left I guess
nowadays or just for globalists who just
want everybody under control
they don't want uh revolting peasants
so I mean
in a healthy diverse Society there's
going to be violent people who are
willing to fight to protect their
country preferably they've got enough

Traditional Values that they are
patriotic and fighting to protect their
country rather than just rampaging and
pillaging and looting and so forth

but

uh

guys he says here adult advice Voyager
says here that it seems that defeating
communism is important enough to put
aside pacifism and that reminds me of
something that neem karoli Baba said in
India back in like the the late 60s or
early 70s when communism was threatening
to take over India
and he was saying there's too much
Dharma in India for communism to get a
foothold here

and apparently he was right in that case
um and really I mean it is a matter of
of karma whether you uh live in a
Communist dictatorship or not
that you know it's it's largely your own
doing you are creating your reality or
you're creating your own virtual reality
but uh there are things you can do I
mean uh defeating communism you know
just peaceful non-cooperation you know
gandhian tactics maybe or or just leave
go somewhere else
um or I mean if you really think it's
worth taking the hit taking the karmic
hit you can fight to protect your
country and your family and your loved

ones

so

if you just feel that it is your Dharma

in life to be a sheepdog

then who knows maybe uh that's the thing

to do but I mean you are going to be

taking a hit you'll become a tragic hero

where you are sacrificing your own

spiritual welfare for the benefit of

others to protect the innocent and the

helpless and so forth and that's not

entirely blameworthy

so I think I'll just move on to uh the

next question this is from Saint sword I

assume it's Saint sword and not Saints

word it's all one word

and he says he asked the same question

twice he asked it on the previous q a
but it was after I'd already recorded
the the Q a I think and so he asked it
again so you get two different versions
of the same question here the the older
version is what's the difference between
winyana and cheetah the best I've come
up with is that cheetah is the totality
of mind while winyana is the reflective
quality of mind bending back on itself
and then the second version of the same
question is what's the difference
between the concepts of cheetah and
winyana is there any reason to suspect
that one of them may have been a later
addition and therefore a concept the

Buddha never really used the best I can tell is that cheetah is the Mind as a whole from cognition to perception to everything in between and winyana is the reflective mechanism of the mind bending back on itself winyana would be the mind seeing itself as a separate thing from everything else non-duality would refer to this bending back as it's the Mind subject taking itself as object and therefore the mind is itself non-dual and uh by golly you know something I'm going to plug in this computer before the the battery starts running dead and warns me and then I'm interrupted like half hour or an hour from now instead of me interrupting myself right now in a

second

this always happens

it's right in there

oh yeah

so the difference between cheetah and

winyana well

for starters there's a lot of overlap

because cheetah can be a synonym for

winano

like in the abidama philosophy you got

four four ultimate realities you've got

cheetah cheetah cheetah Sika

Rupa and nibana so here cheetah just

means it's a synonym for consciousness

but

um usually cheetah is rendered as mind

so it can also just mean mind in general

so it's

um like in a technical sense it's the

same as winyana but it can also just

mean mind in general so it has like a

broader less vague less technical sense

but um like as as technical words

they're they're not different things

their cheetah is consciousness but it

can also mean under other contexts just

like normal talk it can just mean mind

sometimes it's translated as heart but

that's not good hadaya is literally the

the organ that pumps blood

um there are a few people that are just

staunch Advocates of self view who will

try to prove that the Buddha taught that

there is a soul by translating cheetah
as soul but it means mind essentially
so with regard to the mind bending back
on itself I mean that would be
self-consciousness and
um that's really not what Buddhism
teaches that I mean even a frog or a
goldfish or a mosquito has Consciousness
it just doesn't have self-consciousness
or like science you know there are
relatively few animals on this planet
that have self-consciousness they've
done experiments like they'll
anesthetize an animal and put a blue
spot on its face and then they'll show
it a mirror and there's only a few

species that will recognize that that
spot on the face of the image in the
mirror is actually their own and they'll
try and rub off the spot and even
gorillas don't have that chimpanzees uh
dolphins

uh there's there's a few other I can't
remember now I think maybe orangutans
possibly an elephant even I'm not sure
but there's not very no in humans humans
are on the list too most humans anyway
so I'm just rambling all over the place
this is like it's sort of like my
gimmick you know

different people have different gimmicks
I just like ramble and digress all over
the place

so I think I answered that question so
I'll just move on to Saint sword's next
question and this is this is sort of a
response to some wrangling back and
forth like in previous
um episodes of this q a
um you know he sometimes he would just
make a comment about like Aruba Janna
we've sort of been wrangling or
discussing arupa Jana or the formless
contemplations
and uh he was
having some difficulty understanding
what I was saying which is
understandable because I mean you have
to resort to like Paradox and and like

anyway so anyway he says and there's
actually two questions at the end of
this so I'm this is legitimate questions
here okay let me spell this out and you
can correct me if I'm still misre
representing your position so he's
trying to understand my position
first and so the points he's got here
are one the arupa janas are different
sorts of nothingness Infinite Space
infinite nothingness Etc two nothingness
is synonymous with the contents of
Consciousness being removed
three therefore due to one and two when
the Mind enters an arupa Jana the
content of Consciousness is thus removed
for when the content of Consciousness is

removed Consciousness is indeterminate
it's not that it exists or doesn't exist
is active or not arises or not it's
indeterminate five therefore due to
three and four when the Mind enters in a
rupajana Consciousness is indeterminate
so I should respond to these before I
get to his questions so number one the
arupa janas are different sorts of
nothingness Infinite Space infinite
nothingness Etc

um not necessarily I wouldn't entirely
agree with that I mean different sorts
of nothingness you might you might call
it like different degrees of nothingness
but the whole purpose of arupa John is I

my theory is that they don't go back to
the time of the Buddha this is like a
later Innovation it was like
um my theory is there's there's
different possible yeah explanations for
arupa janas being added to Buddhist
philosophy and Buddhist ethics after the
fact after nabuta had already passed
away and somebody else added them in and
my theory is that the arupa janas uh
like infinite Consciousness neither
perception or non-perception
um like nothingness that they were
attempts at describing the enlightened
mind the mind that has attained in
nibana full Enlightenment and that as
Buddhist philosophy developed they've

sort of fell out of favor you know they
they got out competed by other
explanations or or whatever you know
there was like this virus-like mutation
of Buddhist philosophy during you know
of hundreds of years after the time of
the Buddha
and um they just did not win the
competition as explanations but I mean
there are some of these are are found in
the Suites they have like a precedent in
the sutas themselves especially or in
the Pariah nawaga has at least three of
these you know you could plausibly
attribute these arupa genas like
infinite infinite um or neither

perception or non-perception or

nothingness

or the infinite Consciousness one or

let's see yeah infinite Consciousness

that's the famous uh verse in the Deegan

ikaya and the majikaya talking about

Enlightenment obvious or nibana

obviously as infinite formless

consciousness

you know unmanifest luminous all-round

and so these explanations just sort of

fell by the wayside they they wound up

being considered unorthodox as

explanations of the enlightened mind but

they were too well known to just you

know purge them from all the all the

sutas and so forth and so they they

attributed

which are like in they're kind of higher than fourth John a fourth John I used to be the highest level of meditation you know the highest possible level of meditation but the Indian mind is always wanting to elaborate and just outdo the the absolute as it's already been explained before and so

um these got added just sort of in between

um neoroda samopadi which is an even higher one and fourth genre which used to be the highest but isn't anymore and um I wrote an article that is on my blog

I wrote it back around last May or so
um before I posted it background last
May that's giving my best explanation
for where arupa Jonas came from like for
example one little bit of evidence is
the samanya Pala suta which is
describing the the fruits of the
contemplative life and it starts at
relatively crude stuff and then works up
goes through the four genres and then
after the four genres it starts talking
about these psychic attainments that a
person can get it doesn't even mention
the four arupa Jones the formless realms
for example and the Buddha himself when
he died he died in fourth genre like in
the Hari nibana mahapari nibana suta the

Buddha is in his last fatal illness and
he's dying

he goes into first John on second John a
third John a fourth Jonah and then he
goes into these arupa janas and then I
think he may have attained nerota
samopadi and then he goes back down in
reverse order back down the first Jonah
if I remember correctly and then he goes
up to Fourth genre and becomes
enlightened and um

I think it was just too well established
that he died in fourth Jonna so they had
to but they had all these newer hired
genres or contemplative States or just
meditative states that they'd added

after that so they had him go all the way up to the top one and then have to come back down again so he could die in Fort John according to the well-established tradition of that time but I'm just this this is still just point number one I haven't gotten the questions yet so I'll just move on to a second statement he's trying to understand my point of view here with regard to uh formless contemplations it's just nothingness is synonymous with the contents of Consciousness being removed and with regard to like nothingness in general it just means contents of anything I mean there's just no content

but with regard to
um nothingness as like a an arupa Janna
or a formless contemplation it's it's
the perception of emptiness
which means it's not really emptiness
because there is a perception there
so then he says in point number three
therefore due to number one and number
two when the Mind enters arupa genre the
contents of Consciousness is thus
removed I mean going with Orthodoxy I
mean my opinion is that they're just
sort of a like an artifact that
um fourth genre really was originally
the highest level and then these these
ones just got added later as sort of

apocrypha

but according to Orthodox tradition

is that uh

there's always a perception according to

Orthodox Buddhism

Consciousness always has to be

consciousness of something that you

cannot have when you're anaconda or the

the

aggregate of Consciousness without

sunyakonda which is the aggregate of

perception you cannot have one without

the other if you have perception you

have to have Consciousness and if you

have Consciousness you have to have

perception this is orthodox you know

like abidama the commentaries that sort

of thing

and so in formless contemplations you've
got a very

sort of like a very vague very subtle
perceptual perceptual object but it's
still there and that's why the very

highest genre is the realm of neither
perception or non-perception because you
can't get to all the way up to

non-perception in a meditative State
according to Orthodox tradition

so the highest level you can get to this
neither perception or non-perception is
you know it's so subtle you can't really
save if it's there or not you know it's
just so subtle that you really can't get

a grasp on it or
wrap your head around there or anything
so we'll move up to point four here when
Consciousness when the content of
Consciousness is removed Consciousness
is indeterminate it's not that it exists
or doesn't exist or it's active or not
horizon or not it's indeterminate well
that's I would say that that is true
when the content of Consciousness is
removed Consciousness itself stops being
consciousness of anything it just starts
being like pure consciousness
and because it's pure Consciousness with
no limiting object it just becomes
formless and it's it's essentially
what the upanishads are calling you know

the Atman which is Brahman

but from the Buddhist point of view I
mean Nirvana it's not samsaric it's not
is or isn't or is and isn't or neither
is nor isn't once you get into this

formless

absolute

then

you can't pin it down within a dualistic
context of is or isn't it's just off the
scale and Consciousness when it when it
doesn't have

uh and a perceptual object anymore when
it doesn't have any object it's formless
and I mean this is I'm bordering on
heresy here because uh Theravada Orthodox

teravada you know it just says you
cannot have Consciousness without
perception

but I think if you are able to eliminate
the perception you have pure
Consciousness it causes the
Consciousness to just become
indeterminate and then you can't say if
it does or doesn't exist you can't say
that it does or doesn't or does and
doesn't or neither doesn't nor doesn't
it just becomes paradoxical and off the
scale

just like pneumonia

and that's one reason why in at least uh
two suttas they've got this ancient
fragment of a verse saying that nibana

is essentially infinite formless

consciousness

so anyway

um

see here Saint sword says

therefore due to three and four when the

Mind enters an arupa Consciousness it is

indeterminate not because even according

to Orthodox taravada even the arupa

janas have perceptual content and that

the like the realm of infinite

nothingness or just nothingness I mean

it's nothingness because it's not you

it's you can't have nothing that's

really as a perceptual object because to

perceive it you've got to have limits to

it

I mean your a perception can't just
spread out in all directions or it just
becomes the same as the Consciousness
and it's it's indetermine itself

so

yeah when when mine enters Aruba genre
no it does not become indeterminate
unless you're agreeing with my theory
that some of these arupa genres at least
at least three of them are attempts to
describe the enlightened mind and if it
really is the enlightened mind then one
could argue that Consciousness is
indeterminate but it's not because
they're in a state of arupa genre it's
just because the Aruba genas were

originally attempts at describing the
enlightened mind that became unorthodox
as the philosophy developed and so they
got relegated to this very exalted
meditative state

but it's not Enlightenment yet

so dancing sword says my questions here

then are one this seems to violate the

reverse order of pedicia when namarupa

ceases when Yana ceases what is the

difference here if namarupa not the same

is namarupa not the same as the contents

of Consciousness well this is kind of a

complicated this is this is getting

complicated

I mean it's

with regard to penicious I also think
that the 12 links the 12 nidana theory
of benicius and Opana the Buddhist the
Buddhist Theory of Everything But it
also

um was added later not itself but the 12
link theory of it the 12 link method of
describing it or explaining it
and so how early these 12 links
became standardized I don't know because
namarupa is one of is a word literally
means name and form

that probably originally like when the
Buddha was using the term it was pretty
much synonymous for perception like the
diversifying mind

that Nama is the name and Rupa is the

form and in a way it's kind of reverse
it's like papancha Sanka is in the right
order but it means essentially the same
as papaja Sanka

a pawnshot you divide the world up into
parts

and then you give names to all the parts
and that's where the world comes from
and namarupa is similar to that except
it's you know you've got forms you
identify the form and then you slap some
kind of label on even though the label
might just mean it might be just what
the hell is that you know it whatever
that is I don't know but you know
there's still you're identifying

something and like putting some sort of
perceptual significance onto that

something

including nothingness

so this when namarupa ceases when Yana
ceases

um I mean which definition of namoruba

is it I mean later on it became Orthodox

that namarupa means mind and matter and

then here Nama would be more like mental

States like you know the the perceiving

Mind whereas is sort of like the the

foundation of the perceiving Mind

so it's hard to say when the 12 need on

a link started which was the correct

interpretation of namarupa and also it's

not necessarily A temporal sequence

that they could be simultaneous so that
if when Yara ceases nomarupa's thesis
um you know it could be there it's
simultaneous that's that's another
plausible explanation even though again
Orthodox tradition hasn't defined it
that way

so

um I mean they could be saying that
Consciousness and mental states have to
exist together you can't have one
without the other that is the Orthodox
hard-line position and I'm not in total
disagreement with that because once you
get rid of the mental States the
Consciousness assuming that

Consciousness hasn't ceased it just goes
off the scale it just becomes
paradoxical so you can't really say that
it exists so in a way I'm not entirely
in disagreement with this that
Consciousness in order to be
recognizable as Consciousness it has to
be consciousness of something
so it's not the same as the contents of
Consciousness yeah in this context if it
is

um

well the Nama part
you know according to Orthodox Buddhism
the Nama aspect would be the same as the
contents of Consciousness whereas the
Rupa would be the physical body

of the like the fertilized zygote

fertilized egg

when life begins

so I think I've answered that so I'll

move on to the point question two here

what is the difference between a

rupajanas and Ani dasana

well

Ana is from that

um archaic verse that is found in the

digha and the majama which apparently

pretty obviously is describing

nibano as

unmanifest Consciousness anidasana means

not showing unmanifesto means

Consciousness and the arupa genres like

I already said it depends on whether you accept my theory that they're like Apocrypha that were added after the time of the Buddha or if you're like a hard-nosed Orthodox and you want to think you want to believe or prefer to believe that the Buddha actually taught formless realms

uh formless genres what the difference is

um

if if you go with my theory then the Arup one arupa Jana would be pretty much in the same terms as unmanifest conscious the realm of infinite consciousness

or if you prefer the Orthodox

explanation which probably most
terravonna Buddhists would
understandably then

I forget what the commentary says is the
meaning of anidas maybe I should have
looked it up you can look it up if
you've got like bikubody's translation
of the the Maji manikaya you can look
back in the notes

um and see what the Orthodox explanation
is so anidas I think according to the
commentarial tradition it may be defined
as

maybe as as a formless genre one of them
not all of them

but I don't remember but you can you can

look it up if you've got access to
bikubody's

Uma um nikaya translation or if you have
access to the commentarial tradition you
have access to like some Burmese scholar
monk who can explain it to you maybe
so I mean

yeah it's too bad I forgot what the com
the official commentarial definition is
it might be in that that essay that I
wrote with regard to the formless the
formless contemplations that's on my
blog probably I published it back around
May and it might be in one of my books
too no no it's not it's also on the
nipabancha.org website
um it's like an appendix to an article I

wrote about tarot cards and Ouija boards
so um just look on nepapuncha.org and
find the essay on tarot cards and Ouija
boards and then just scroll past that to
get to the appendix and that's the same
article the same essay giving my
explanation of the formless Realms or
the formless genres

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

I don't know if I'm pronouncing it right

I've never seen this name before Kubo I

think and he just recently uh became um

a donor on subscribe star so welcome

Kubo all hail makubo

and uh mikubo says

are there any Buddhist teachings that deal with the problem of Exile or being confined to live in one disagreeable location I am from the UK which as you are no doubt aware is slowly undergoing a neo-marxist cultural revolution curbs on freedom of speech high crime levels and orwellian propaganda centered on Race gender Etc have now become normality due to high levels of immigration the native population will likely become an ethnic minority within my lifetime and I fear the inevitable social conflict that will follow I used to live in Japan where the quality of life is much better in general especially with regard to crime and

personal safety not to mention being
surrounded by a much more beautiful and
traditional culture that stimulates and
inspires not demoralizes

I miss living there every day however
due to health reasons and family
obligations I am unable to return there
long term are there any specific
techniques to detach from this desire do
you ever feel intense Cravings to return
to Burma and how do you deal with them
well I'll answer that last one first do
I ever feel intense Cravings to return
to Burma now no I don't I it ran its
course with me and uh
it may be better to be a monk in Burma I

do think it's if I were a monk probably
Burma would be preferable but to be a
layperson you're better off in America
than in Burma

um and partly because Burma is a
military dictatorship it's blazing hot
and the people there think differently
than I do so there's always this culture
barrier even if you learn to speak the
language fluently it's really hard to to
to communicate at more than a
superficial level because the the
assumptions are so different
with regard to life in general and also
um you know like rural Village People
bless their hearts they're good people
they're virtuous people the most

virtuous people I've ever met in my life
were villagers in Northwestern Burma
uh Central Northwestern Burma in general
um but they just don't think very much
you know it's they have like a medieval
mindset you know they think more like a
medieval European like peasant
than you know like I do
and so there's always this this barrier
but

um I should have just said I don't
really feel the intense Cravings to
return to Burma and moved on to the the
bigger more important question here are
there any specific techniques to detach
from this desire to be in a better place

I mean I assume there are some parts of of the UK that would be better than others but there's one thing that you need to consider is that like in the Buddhist time it was a time of like Psychopathic Kings and just chronic Warfare in fact there's a list of 10 dangers that for example there are 10 dangers that make it allowable if any of these happens it makes it allowable to abbreviate a formal ceremony like the padimoka recitation and number one on the list is always rajas it's it's Kings and that's not necessarily just hostile foreign Kings invading with armies I mean it can be your own King that he's just like cons-scripting people into the

army or conscripting people to to build
some Monument or or he's just like
decides to double the taxes and he's the
law

and so I mean things have always sucked
pretty much I mean we're living in a
fortunate age where I mean the most
we've got to complain about is uh
cultural Marxism I mean cultural Marxism
does suck I agree but uh at least we're
not being tortured yet you know we're
not just being arrested in the middle of
the night by the secret police and being
hauled into like torture chambers which
happen like under Stalin in the USSR
happen in lots of places probably still

happens like in Burma probably it's
happening right now
if it's nighttime in Burma
so

I mean again it's it's our own Karma
it's our own mental states that are
creating our reality and so the best we
can do is maintain Equanimity I mean if
you can improve the situation
then go ahead and improve it which might
just mean moving to a place that is more
you know where the the people there the
population you know maybe a small town
where the population is less
politically correct or something they
take it less seriously I mean that's
that's pretty much what I did by moving

to South Carolina

um you know working in a sheet metal
shop every single guy that works there
has a beard and I wouldn't be surprised
if all of them vote Republican

I assume there must be places like that
in the UK I mean if you're living in
London uh I feel sorry for you
or Birmingham

I guess uh the most most common baby
boy's name in Birmingham Alabama or
Birmingham Alabama Birmingham England is
is Muhammad

I don't know what it is in Birmingham
Alabama

ah so

let's see I mean any specific techniques
to detach from this desire I mean the
standard technique for dealing with
almost any kind of
like occurring like mental unease is
mindfulness just watch it observe the
urge or observe the desire as though
you're an ichthyologist observing a dead
fish you know what's it like how does it
make me feel just watch it and when you
watch a desire or you watch anger or
fear or worry or whatever it is you've
already made a you've already detached
from it because if you are anything
you're the one who's doing the observing
not the thing being observed so if you
can observe something you know it's not

you

and so if You observe this desire to to
get the hell out of this

cyberpunk dystopia then I mean if

especially if you can't get out of the
cyberpunk dystopia

um you just observe the desire and then

it's not you you are you are observing

this mental state and already you've

caused this Detachment from it and

you've weakened the power of it a great

deal and it's really a powerful practice

with regard to any problematic mental

state that comes up just observe it and

just by the very fact that you're

observing it I mean sometimes like if

it's a thought you can't observe the
thought and think the thought at the
same time it's like the same parts of
your brain are responsible for both
actions and it just stops it right then
and there but if you can't get rid of it
uh in that way just observing it causes
this philosophical Detachment it's not
you anymore it's not I want to live
somewhere else it's just
um you know at at its lowest form is you
know I am observing this desire
and that sort of thing is it can also be
used for certain mental disorders like
OCD the person who uh you know has to
wash his hands 50 or 100 times a day or
check the front door to make sure it's

locked or you know there's all these
different uh ways that OCD can manifest
itself

and I used to know one of the world's
leading authorities on on OCD and he was
using mindfulness techniques like
Buddhist study patana techniques to cure
people without having to give them drugs
or anything and it's just you observe it
you know it's it's not you it's just
this OCD symptom that's coming up again
and again

I mean it was more to it than that but
that was that was like Central to it
so I mean I wish you wish you luck I
mean it does say in the suit is it's

good to live in a place that's conducive
to practicing dhamma

like it's one of the 38 blessings in the
Maha mangala suta

um so I mean you should do the best you
can within within your limitations

within you know the realistic

possibilities and then I mean if you're

still dissatisfied then you have to

start being mindful of the

dissatisfaction and observing it and

just trying to cure yourself of being

dissatisfied because ultimately it's not

outward circumstances that make us happy

or unhappy it's our own refusal to

accept the outward circumstances that

makes us unhappy 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 won't accept it it's a problem so
ultimately all suffering all unhappiness
is self-inflicted which is the exact
opposite of what like the political left
is is trying to
spoon feed us
so you might be surrounded by people who
are just absolutely convinced that all
unhappiness is caused by evil Whitey for
example but you can know better than
that and that will improve your karma
your karma if you prefer poly
and uh the likelihood of things getting
better will improve just because your

mental states are improved because your
mental states are what is essentially
creating a reality

so I think I'll just move on a nice
question here and this is from moo

does a dog have Buddha nature

no that's not the question the question
is have you ever experimented with
sorcery or witchcraft

that's kind of an interesting question
and

I mean I've never really experimented
with sorcery or witchcraft except for
just a little bit like when I was in
high school

I I was sweet on this girl and I tried
to do a love spell on her but whether it

worked or not I don't know don't know
she didn't start throwing herself at me
but I think there's a good chance if I
had asked her out she would have said
yes but I was so bashful around her
because I was so impressed by her that I
just never worked up the nerve to ask
her out even after like taking a note
that she she sent to me in in class one
day and I can't remember the whole
ceremony but I remember I'm pretty sure
that I I cut my finger and Drew a heart
in my blood on the thing I mean I have
done sort of things that could be
considered sort of like love spell stuff
or just sort of magic sympathetic magic

that's love oriented I mean I've I've
done stuff like that instead of a kind
of a personal nature but
um I shouldn't be too explicit but I
mean you can just do little things like
that and just uh you know just like
Infuse your Juju into something before
you give it to her you know you're like
you know you're just like trying to fill
it with love or something before before
giving to her as a gift just so that the
love will
like influence her her feelings towards
you or something
yeah that kind of thing I've done before
but I mean like the incantations and you
know you have to get the you know the

toe of frog and the eye of Newt and all
this stuff and all that stuff now so
we'll just move on to next question this
is from CEO vax and sipad zidana
and silvaction who's proudly teased a
lot as a kid
at school says I tried to generate some
Vega urgency
by watching cartel execution videos and
have still not recovered you said you
had a lot more to say about the morgue
can you please go into more detail about
the whole situation why you were there
graphic details of what you saw Etc yeah
I can do that but it would take probably
at least half an hour so I'll just have

to do a separate video hopefully I mean
maybe even today but within the next
seven days I'm pretty sure I cannot do a
video about my my trips to the morgue
when I was a monk living in Burma
but yeah like I say I mean in order to
do it justice it would take probably at
least half an hour and uh
I don't think we're gonna have time for
that
in this in this video so yeah I'll just
do a separate video of that sooner or
later preferably you know sooner
probably sooner than later
so we'll just move on to C of action and
super zidana's next question
you say nibana is like hegel's being a

non-being merging

however that sounds like bawatana

Nirvana seems like it is beyond being a

non-being

like how it is beyond existence and

non-existence

rejecting both rather than both being

true and in the traditional

interpretation of the twelve nidanas

which I know you don't think dates back

to the Buddha

being and non-being are both links

independent origination and only arise

due to a cause what do you think about

this conceptualization

well first I would say I'm unaware of

non-being being one of the links

independent co-rising in the 12 nidana

Theory yeah it's not there you've got

boa which literally could be translated

as existence although according to

Orthodox tradition it means it's it's

like your karma that you're taking into

your next life you know after you die

like the force of existence you know

it's like that's what karma is for the

force of samsaric existence but um let's

see here

I see nibana it's like hegel's being a

non-being merging yeah in a sense on

what I mean Hegel I mean I almost every

every episode of this q a i talk about

the beginning of hegel's logic where he

starts out his very first premise in his whole dialectic it starts with pure being and then the antithesis to Pure being is pure non-being and he says that they're just indistinguishable you know it's not

being and non-being in a way I mean it's you can't say which it is they're both the same

but I mean I like that idea that everything and nothing is is this essentially the same like in some quantum physics you know they're saying the quantum field contains zero energy and infinite energy simultaneously just depends on how you do the math

you know empty space contains zero energy and infinite energy which could be uh backing up Hegel here in his saying that absolute being and absolute non-being are the are indistinguishable but in my case I'm not saying that the the like the synthesis that Hegel came up with was like distinctions you have to have like dualism in order to separate being from non-being you know you have to have like perception and that's what starts the whole universe going you know it's like in the Dow teaching you know it's like um from the Dow came the one from the one came the two from the two came the ten thousand things you know you start

off with this absolute it's like
nebulous you can't even really say if
it's it's there or not and then it's
it's when it starts like
getting divided up
you know through like contrasts that
creates the ten thousand things of the
samsaric world

so

um so in a way nibana I mean again you
can't say that it is you can't say that
it isn't you can say that it is and
isn't you can't say that neither is nor
is it just is off the scale completely
and people trying to understand this
intellectually this is this is like part

of the problem you've got these intellectual people that are trying to wrap their head around this they're trying to understand what is completely off the scale and it's completely off the scale of of like conceptual intellectual understanding it's just I mean you can't touch it the intellect cannot touch Nirvana you can sort of give little labels to it that feel satisfying but never is anyone ever going to really understand what Nirvana is or what God is through intellectual thinking or reading Jehovah's Witness literature or anything like that and with regard to sounds like and we bought now are both kinds of

Cravings means craving so bawatana is craving for existence and we bought not as craving for non-existence and nibana is not any kind of craving I mean almost by definition nibana has no craving involved because craving is suffering and nibana is Liberation from suffering so

okay see any of the traditional explanation and being a non-being of both links independent origination um being a non-being are are both links they're like the same Link in a kind of proto-dependent co-origination like uh if you read the kalahawiwara suta it's saying that existence and

non-existence are both derived from this
other I haven't read the sutra in a while
it's derived from something else it's
like some mental state causes
existence and non-existence to to
manifest in the world
so I mean that's that's a whole
different ball of wax there
let's see
what do I think about this
conceptualization I mean when I think
about
conceptualizations in general is that
they're never going to understand nibana
you just have to get to this Cliff Edge
and just be okay with standing at a
cliff Edge and realizing you're never

going to wrap your head around it

intellectually

you just have to accept that plain fact

because you're never going to wrap your

head around intellectually you're never

going to get nibana

conceptually it's just not going to

happen

so I'll just move on to CEO of action

zidane's next question here

the Buddhist understanding of

Consciousness seems like the content

idea that there is no special or

ultimate conscious experience being any

more real than another in fact he was

probably influenced by Buddhism we never

directly touch reality and this lines up with when the Buddha himself says when he calls the six forms of Consciousness as all and the Consciousness just being sensory data in a way that only arises due to a cause however if we say nibana is the one experience where it does have the property of being the ultimate truth then doesn't that undermine the entire Buddhist understanding of Consciousness maybe that could be a reason why tradition does not call nibbana a kind of Consciousness conscious experience because it logically doesn't make much sense giving the Buddha's teaching of what Consciousness is so hence why is it closer to being the end of experience

rather than experience itself like

hearing or seeing

thoughts

well again I mean you're never going to

understand Nirvana conceptually it's

just not going to happen

I'm gonna drink some of this

so

we can start with abhidham and just

Orthodox Theravada which says that

Consciousness and nibbana are two

absolutely different things you know one

is not the form of the other they are

just there are four ultimate realities

Consciousness mental States

physical matter and nibbana so nibbana is

completely different from from mind

which

Orthodox hero model has real difficulty

because they're trying to do the same

thing as a lot of my viewers are doing

they're trying to conceptualize nibana

they're trying to fit it into this

system you know it's on this nibbanos on

the same list as mind and matter and

mentals and and form you know it's just

on the same list you know all you got

all the songs sorry phenomena nibbana is

just on the very same list and it's it's

not on the same list it's not in the

ballpark you know it's off the scale

Terror even Orthodox caravada because

they were so into analysis and just

intellectual form formalizing everything
they just they had to explain it
otherwise they'd be accused of being
ignorant or something and
it just doesn't work that way
so we see nibana as the one experience
where it does have the property of being
the ultimate truth
then doesn't undermine the entire
Buddhist understanding of Consciousness
um is terravonna's attempts at
describing nibana I think are really
deficient
in coming anywhere close to being
successful because any kind of
explanation you just can't do it all you

can do like the Buddha himself did if
somebody wants to know what Nirvana is
like you can't explain it to them like
I've given this example before let's say
something hillbilly who's been eating
possum his whole life comes down and
meets with you and asks you what's
Vanilla tastes like I've never had
vanilla before I've never had vanilla
flavored anything I want to know what it
tastes like what does it taste like
explain it to me
and you could stand there to your blue
in the face trying to explain what
vanilla tastes like he's going to be
absolutely clueless he'll just have this
blank look on his face he might politely

cut a nod slowly every now and then what he doesn't know I mean you could be a Nobel prize-winning chemist who won the Nobel Prize in studying the molecular structure of vanilla and how it interacts with the taste buds on the tongue and how the nerve impulses go to the brain how it's processed there and everything you can have a Nobel Prize in that you wouldn't be able to explain what vanilla tastes like even that Nobel prize-winning physicist who has studied vanilla his entire life you know the molecular structure of it and everything he won't know what vanilla tastes like unless he's actually tastes vanilla so

what you have to do if you want to know
what vanilla tastes like you got to go
and get some vanilla and that's what you
should do someone asks you what vanilla
tastes like instead of wasting your time
trying again and again to explain what
vanilla tastes like you just go get some
vanilla and have them taste her just
tell them you know just go to go down to
the store and get some vanilla extract
get some vanilla ice cream Maybe
and that's what the Buddha was doing
he's not sitting there trying to explain
what Nirvana is like because it's just
it's an exercise in futility what he
does he just tells you how to get
enlightened and then you'll know for

yourself

and that's the only way to understand

nibana all this intellectual you know

well I mean isn't it a violation of this

or I mean infinite Consciousness I mean

I mean there have been attempts at

describing it in certain ways but any

explanation is going to fail

oh

see here

did I answer the question

hmm let's see here

the Buddhist understanding of

Consciousness seems like the content

idea that there is no special or

ultimate conscious experience being any

more real yeah Kant was not a Mystic see
that's part of the thing with Kant was
saying there's no way you can ever know
the thing in itself but there is one
thing in itself that we do have access
to and that is our own thing in itself
you know the one that we're we're like a
manifestation of
and that's Consciousness I mean pure
Consciousness would be the thing in
itself and it's just off the scale
to know Consciousness as Consciousness
would be to know a thing in itself and
that's what Mystics and advanced
meditators are doing these they're
trying to do it
and that's the only way you're ever

going to know what nibana is to
experience it or at least you can sort
of get close to it like you get into
advanced genic States for example and in
the text that's called like temporary
Liberation you know you're getting at
least some kind of idea just through
what it isn't you know it's just
everything gets so subtle that you know
all the things that you think maybe it
is that obviously don't apply anymore
so let's see here if we see nibonna as
the one experience where I mean you
can't say it's an experience you can't
say that it's not experience you can't
say that it is and is not an experience

and you can't say that neither is nor is
not an experience

exercise and futility

so I think I'll just move on to the next
question here

this is also from CEO of action

and this one is a refreshingly easy one

you know you I do I do appreciate easy
questions sometimes

and so he says I just noticed that

birthday cake in the thumbnail how was

it you have really cool thumbnails in

general well with regard to the really

cool thumbnails I'll just uh thank my

sweetheart for that because she makes

most of them she makes about 80 of the

thumbnails nowadays and almost all of

the Q a thumbnails especially lately
she's done all of them so you have heard
a thing for that she's very artistic
very aesthetic
but with regard to the cake itself
uh the wife of a friend of mine who is
also a friend of mine
made it for my birthday and it was like
chocolate ganache I had never heard of
ganache until I came to South Carolina
and started watching chopped like the
cooking shows
and it was it was like chocolate ganache
very rich with like cream cheese in the
frosting like especially in the filling
part you know in between the layers it

was really good yeah it was it was it
was good

if you walk close to me while I was
eating it I probably would have like
snarled you away from my food

so okay I'll just move on next question

here this is from rui

and rui says hello Ponyo are there any
substantial roots in the sutos for the
two truths Doctrine or is it entirely a
later invention well I have been told
that the two truths you know

conventional truth and ultimate truth
um are not found like explicitly in the
students that that is like a
commentarial thing but it's pretty
obvious that the two truths are implied

in the Suites for example like in the
Attica Wagga

I can't remember exactly which suit on
it's one of the uh uh

one of the the suit is on tactical

deployment the wiihu house is saying

there is one truth not another or which

a wise man would argue with a wise man

so I mean you could adopt the idea that

you know ultimate truth is the only real

truth because conventional truth isn't

really true it's called conventional

truth you know samudi Sacha conventional

truth but it's not really true it's just

agreed upon as true because we all

because we're all human we all share the

same flavor of delusion

and so we we all agree and I mean that

sort of thing is mentioned in the text

it's it's called Uh

uh

where I mean like the the enlightened

long you know he's

he's got his mind in a state of

Enlightenment and he doesn't believe in

in people walking around or trees or

anything like that you know he doesn't

believe that they're real but still you

use the language that is being used by

the people around you and like the

Buddha himself I mean he taught that

there is no self but still he's talking

about himself and this person and that

person and so even though I mean your
mind is in the absolute you know your
mind knows Ultimate Reality it's still I
mean you have to function at the worldly
level which is a level of delusion
essentially

so I mean it is that that sort of thing
is mentioned and so it is implied in the
suit as even though it didn't really get
called to truths

um until you get to the commentarial
literature

the next one

next question is from Joe Doe

and I don't know if Joe Doe is joking

here

but Joe Doe says was Adolf Hitler

enlightened

well that all depends on who you talk to

for example if you talk to Mahayana

Buddhists some a lot of Mayana Buddhists

would say that we are all Buddhas you

know we're all enlightened we just don't

notice it

like uh Eckhart tolles

first big famous book The Power of Now

he starts off with a little story about

you know how everyone is essentially

enlightened you know we've all got you

know Ultimate Reality you know we're

soaking in it and you know there's

always an awareness of it it's just that

our mind is making so much noise that

it's just distracting and so we're not
paying attention

so I mean like a lot of Mahayana

Buddhists would say sure Adolf Hitler

was enlightened but um going with a more

Orthodox approach no he was not

enlightened I mean he'd get upset I mean

I'm sure you've seen the hit the rants

videos he'd ran about all kinds of

strange stuff

and uh I mean he he was kind of a ranty

kind of a person and ranting is not

enlightened

um he would like encourage like hate

um

I don't know how to explain this but he

sort of like as a politician he prospered when things weren't going well because he could like sort of get the people riled up in like righteously indignant about stuff and you know he was kind of manipulating people he told lies sometimes I'm sorry if there's any people out there who don't think that Hitler ever told lies but uh yeah like the whole Munich agreement thing and you know Sue date and land and all that um yeah I mean he was not he was not enlightened I mean I don't think he was as much of a sociopath as someone like Pol Pot or Joseph Stalin I really do not think he was the evildest person in the world

um

and there's a lot of a lot of propaganda
against him but

you know he was not a saint he was not a
sage in my opinion you know he was uh he
could be pretty devious at times

so let's see I'll just uh I mean he was

he was an interesting guy he was a

vegetarian you know didn't even drink
caffeinated beverages

like the Sierra sweet tea

he wasn't like 100 Pure Evil and I'm

sure he had at least some little spark
of wisdom

but uh

yeah he uh got on the wrong side of the

uh the proto-globalists I think

and also he just didn't know when to

quit

so I mean we don't need to get into uh

the pros and cons of Adolf Hitler so

I'll just move on to the next question

here

this is from

bodhisatta969 and bodhisatta 969 says

how do you think about the simile of the

saw

that's just not feasible for a normal

person or was that only addressed to

monks this Parable often arouses doubts

in me

um at first I didn't understand because

there's more than one simulator saw like

one simile of the saw is with regard to anapana meditation like meditating on your breath how the the carpenter he's not following the saw back and forth as he's cutting the wood he's just paying attention right at the wood where the saw is cutting

and that's good advice I mean there are some

um or some meditation instructors who are teaching you to follow the breath in and feel it swirling around in your lungs and your body and then follow it back out again and um I do think that just paying attention to the sensation of the air touching your nostrils is

superior to that as a method you know
it's there's less of this
conceptualizing imagining like a lot of
them will be teaching and you know
follow the breath you know out to your
fingertips and the tips of your toes and
so forth which anyone who knows about
human anatomy knows that it you just
can't feel that it doesn't happen that
way

so actually bodhisatta 969 I'm pretty
sure it's talking about the simile of
the saw where the Buddha is saying that
even if some psychopath probably a king
or a minion of the king is like hacking
off your your arms and legs you know
just like

amputating your appendages one by one
you should you shouldn't have even the
slightest iota of ill will towards this
person you know you should just accept
it with as much meta and Equanimity as
you can manage

and yeah that's with regard to monks
mostly I mean you got a saintly lay
person who can manage that that's fine
but

um I mean the Buddha was mainly teaching
monks you know I mean terrible Buddhism
just Buddhism originally was for
renunciants the lay people were sort of
like the the fans you know they had
their favorite team of Buddhism but the

pro athletes or the monks you know
that's almost all of the sutas were
directed towards monks

so the Buddha himself was a monk
so

um yeah the simile of the saw it's it's
really nice it's there aren't very many
people who could do it you pretty much
have to be like a perfected Saint in
order not to have any ill will towards
people that were cutting off your hands
and feet and arms and legs and nose and
lips and ears and all that although in a
previous life there is a Jonica story
I'm pretty sure about uh kantiwadi I
think it was his name it was the Buddha
in a previous life where the the parami

he was perfecting in that life was Kandi
or like acceptance

and uh yeah some the the king of Kalinga
got got mad at him and uh had his like
his ears and his nose and his arms and
legs all his hands and feet all cut off
and he never the the Conti Wadi you know
the Buddha the bodhisatta you know in
previous existence never had the
slightest iota of of hatred or anger or
or Terror or any of that he just stayed
in this state of acceptance
and uh

attain some high heaven state after he
died he wasn't enlightened yet so he
didn't uh

he didn't stop getting reincarnated so
to speak

so yeah it's like an ideal an ideal that
you can try to live up to but most
people couldn't do it

sort of like in the sut as you know

says a monk should have no anger a monk
should have no lust yeah I mean that's

it sounds really good and I mean if you
can manage it it's fine but

most monks even most of the very best
monks can't manage it

but still I mean it's true it's that's

the ideal that's the best way to be

if you can manage it

so I'll just move on to bodhisatta 969's
next question

which is

as a Buddhist who wants to keep the five
Silas I really want to do it now are you
allowed to drink non-alcoholic beer even
though some non-alcoholic beer has 0.5
percent alcohol I hope the answer is yes
um when I was a monk I had the
opportunity to drink near beer or
whatever it's called now non-alcoholic
beer and I kind of chickened out you
know I was pretty much of a stickler in
my earlier few decades as a monk and uh
yeah I wouldn't do it just because of
the 0.5 percent but I think it's a
judgment call I mean if you've got a
teacher you could ask him and use kind

of like if you're taking the precepts
from a monk then you know in order not
to be on any false pretenses or anything
you could ask him

um about that one but really if it's not
having any noticeable effect
then

yeah I mean that could just be just
clinging to morality and observances at
that point

where you drink a non-alcoholic beer and
it has no effect I mean you don't get
even the slightest buzz from it then

yeah I mean it's sort of like

um there's a kind of a famous story in
the rules of monastic discipline about
there was Ray without the doubter it was

this monk he was a I don't know if he was one of the the great Disciples of the Buddha but he's in he's in Winnie a few times Ray would have the doubter and he had lots of doubts about about the rules of monasticness one and so he sees some people making sugar one time and they were mixing a little bit of flour into the sugar so that it would compact into these balls

and then he's thinking oh it's got It's got flour in it we can't eat that in the afternoon because sugar is allowable for monks to eat in the afternoon if they're sick but wheat flour is not and because there's a small amount of wheat flour in

the sugar I mean he was too scrupulous
to eat the sugar anymore so then it came
to the attention of the Buddha and the
Buddha says if there's so little of it
that I mean it's you don't even consider
it you know it's just called sugar
that's good enough so these Trace
Amounts of non-allowable substances
um if they're really non-noticeable in
the finished product then it could be
seen as okay

but I'm not sure I mean if you take
precepts from a monk you know you go to
him and take the five precepts you
should take them in accordance with his
definitions and online

but I mean you could you could argue

either way I think on that one

so the next question is from vegan

Samurai and I I should say here that

vegan Samurai has asked a total of 12

questions which uh

I'll let it slide this time I don't want

people to think that I'm weak that I

refuse to instill discipline in in my

viewers

but uh vegan Samurai is relatively new

to this channel so I'll just politely

request in the future

I'm trying to keep it to no more than

six questions per episode

um but fortunately they're mostly short

questions and there's not a like a

really large amount of questions in this
this episode so I think I'll let it
slide and try to answer all 12
so let's go let's do this even if we do
it wrong

vegan Samurai says is there any
possibility that I can use the poly
Canon to argue against interracial
marriages or at least marriages between
black and white people or what about
inter-religious marriages

well I don't think uh the poly Cannon
really says much about marriage at all
because it was originally intended for
monks who don't get married in fact it's
a serious offense for a terravonna
Buddhist monk even to participate in a

wedding

that he's he's he's going to do Penance
for six days and six nights it's it's a
serious offense

it's one notch below excommunication

yeah because like in Burma a wedding
ceremony is not performed at a temple by
a by a priest or a monk you just go to
the Village headman and sign some papers
and then you then after it's a done deal
then you can go to the the Monk and
he'll bless you and you know you'll
you'll get Merit by offering food
sometimes it's really cute the new the
newlyweds you know they'll be holding
hands and offering you know both at the

same time you know like both of them are holding on to the same thing to offer to the Monk and asking for his blessings and so forth that's nice but um really the Indian like early Indian Buddhism it really did not say much about marriages and also race is just not much of an issue there was the acknowledgment that the the so-called Aryans you know the the indo-aureans you know sort of the more European uh more fairer-skinned people that lived in Northern India at the time were of a tended to be of a higher social social class than the dark-skinned people who tended to be of like the lower castes you know especially shudras

um so that's acknowledged that it was like that in Ancient India but really the the Buddha was sort of a radical non-racist he didn't believe in even class distinctions you know he made a lot of fun of the caste system and you know it's just like if you get along you know it's a good marriage because you're compatible and everything I'm sure he wouldn't care so I guess uh you can't really use the politkin to argue against interracial marriages

um

or inter-religious marriages I mean it can cause problems especially if you're

very devout you know you marry a Catholic woman I met a few Burmese guys who married like like this one guy he married a Catholic Filipino woman and uh I I really didn't know about his his private life so I don't know if they were happily married or what but um probably it would help to have a woman who at least can is accepting who doesn't think you're going to burn in hell because you belong to the wrong religion or something but that's not really mentioned much in the sutras that I'm aware of it just kind of makes sense so I think I'll just move on to vegan Samurai's next question are monks allowed to wear sandals or

slippers when they are donated well
there's lots of rules about sandals
and it was for many years according to
tradition according to the text for many
years monks had to go barefoot
and then there was this one monk I think
it might have been sonakurikana
who he was born he was so rich and
pampered that he had like Downy fur on
the soles of his feet because he never
had to walk anywhere the Assumption
being that everyone else walks around a
lot so we rub the the Downy fur off of
the bottoms of our feet
um and he was he was like getting like
really like his feet were just bloody

from walking around Barefoot so the
Buddha allowed him to wear sandals and
then because he allowed this one monk to
wear sandals it became allowable for all
monks to wear sandals but I mean they
have to be

like

pretty I'm pretty if I remember

correctly they have to be one layer of
of leather they have to be flip-flops or
sandals that do not cover the toes or
the heels

and there's a whole bunch of forbidden
colors like black or brown is allowable
um I know black even pure black is not
reliable so

um I used to when I was a monk for a

while I was wearing these flip-flops made out of car tires that were all black and I would just smear a little bit of white paint on them just so they wouldn't be all black because all black was forbidden but Brown just regular leather color is okay and they shouldn't be fancy but um and also there are rules I mean this is a little known fact I think even in even in a Buddhist country like Burma but it is forbidden for among to wear sandals in public unless he is sick and uh I assume that if it's so hot that the tarmac or you know the the asphalt is just blistering hot that would qualify as a legitimate reason but

for the most part

um amongst aren't even allowed to wear sandals in public like if you're in the forest or if you're inside the monastery it's allowable

and there's I mean if you want to study up I mean there's a lot of rules on what is allowable and is not allowable for sandals but just plain like thin leather flip-flops are allowable

or just any you should I mean you'd have to look up the list of forbidden colors but mostly it's like they have to be all the same color so you can just sort of put a splotch of discoloration on it which the monk may not like because you may not be really strict about all these

Picayune little rules about flip-flops
so I guess I should just move on to this
question here
because it takes me a hell of a lot
longer to answer a question than it does
take to ask one usually
especially because I'm digressing all
the time so vegan Samurai's next
question how should a Buddhist Society
defend itself against attackers I asked
because the Buddha said that soldiers
will go to hell well I kind of already
answered this one in that you know
you're never gonna have a country where
everybody is a saint you know there's
always going to be people willing to

fight

it's like human nature and

if a country ever comes along where

nobody's willing to fight that country

isn't going to last very long anyway

regardless of what feminized globalists

are shooting for I mean it's just moral

decadence really which is kind of ironic

because I mean if if everyone were

saintly or sagely and just refused to

harm other living beings just out of

moral backbone let's say I mean they

might just the whole country might just

have such good karma like you know the

the mauryan empire under Ashoka that

nobody wants to invade they're just

doing all of the saliness of these

people but um

uh I mean if you got people that are
just so

I mean essentially weak

that you know they just like

they can't bring themselves to be icky

then yeah I mean it's they're they're

they lack moral backbone at that point I

mean there's a lot of really violent

people that Macklemore back that black

moral backbone too

but uh I mean if someone is just so I

mean it's sort of like the uh the

original novel The Planet of the Apes

before all the movies came out and it

was it was a philosophical novel about

how the Apes took over and what happened was humans became so effect so decadent that they were not only unwilling but just incapable of even striking out in self-defense and so it started in Africa with with uh like troops of of Apes just sort of invading Villages and just taking whatever they wanted because the people were so like degenerate in their like bravery or aggressive capacity that they just let it happen and would they couldn't fight back

so I mean there's always going to be somebody

um in the human race who's willing to fight and when he gets to the point where nobody can is even capable of it

then uh probably were going to be replaced

so just rely on the tragic Heroes who are willing to sacrifice their own spiritual wear welfare for the sake of others or I mean somebody could also become a tragic hero like I was saying earlier

but I mean it is definitely a self-sacrifice

so let's see next question from vegan Samurai

was there a Buddhist teacher from the last century who inspired you a lot and that's kind of an interesting question because most of the really inspiring

teachers have been more or less Hindu in my life like I can't think of a really inspiring Buddhist teacher from the last century

um

you know I I can appreciate ajan cha you know I read some of his books

um my my own teacher uh pompulu

chelseindoyo Seattle I mean he because I lived close to him I could see his foibles and shortcomings

and but I mean I respected him but that's not the same as inspiring me a lot there was

um

not the famous ujourika and but uh who jodika of the Tom Pulu tradition he

inspired me to some degree there was one Texan monk who was so ascetic and so strict that he was like a Buddhist Rambo that

um he wasn't really a Buddhist teacher though he was just a Herman he just avoided everybody including me some of the time although I could uh crash his his Solitude and he wouldn't get too upset

so I go hang out with them sometimes so he was sort of like a role model for me when I was a junior monk but I don't he couldn't really call him a Buddhist teacher other than teaching for an example just unwittingly

um but aside from that I mean

yeah I have not been very fortunate with
regard to finding teachers that really
inspire me

and uh like I say I was inspired by name
curly Bama whose picture is back there
Ron Doss who is neem curly Baba's uh
disciple

I mean he wasn't really my type I prefer
the rascality of neem curly Baba to
um just the the pure pristine
saintliness of Ramana maharshi but
um

yeah it's weird it's kind of ironic
isn't it that I really did not know of a
really inspiring Buddhist teacher the
whole time that I was a monk the whole

time that I've been a Buddhist really
I kind of like yoga and senzaki's
translations of Zen Koons but he's he's
kind of a crappy translator he I mean he
doesn't even try to be literal you know
to say exactly what is in the original
Japanese or Chinese but
um he gets it and then he would be able
to translate it in such a way that you
could sort of get the spirit of the koan
which is more important than the just
the literal words anyway

Maybe

I think I'll just move on to the next
question here that's kind of a weird one
though because you know it's kind of

weird to think that as a Buddhist I've
been a Buddhist for most of my life now
and uh there was no real Buddhist
teacher who really inspired me
other than ancient ones
and the Buddha himself for example
so I'll just move on a nice question
here also from vegan Samurai
can a monk give his assistance phone
number to lay people when he receives
money from them so that the laypeople
can give the money to the assistant and
discuss with them how to help the monk
with the money well it's kind of I think
maybe it was just an error in grammar
here when he says when he receives money
from them because a monk is not allowed

to receive money period

um except under very very limited

circumstances

and then it would be somebody else's

money that he's just putting in a safe

place until they come back for it if

they like drop a purse or something at

the monastery

so

um you know technically the money rules

for monks are so strict that almost

nobody even the relatively strict ones

even the exemplary monks that people

talk about even they don't follow the

rules correctly because technically

speaking it is not allowable even to

consent to somebody else keeping money
for you if you're a monk
so it says that if somebody wants to
offer you money I mean you're not
allowed to say okay yeah I'll take that
you can't you can't hold out your hand
you can't you can't really you're not
supposed to respond really and then
they'll say well you
uh like I'll just sit it down here on
the table
you know and then they just walk off and
leave that money there for your behalf
then I mean if you consent to that I
mean if you kind of like the idea of
them leaving the money you have to tell
them don't do it not no don't do it you

have to like speak out against it but if
you don't like the idea

then you can just remain silent and it's
not an offense

so I mean there is a long complicated
rule in the padimoka rules about

somebody wanting to offer money to a
monk for getting some new robes let's

say the monk needs new robes and

somebody says here I'll give you some
money for some new rubs and then the

monk is required to say

monks don't accept money they do accept

robes at the right time you know if it's

Rogue giving time or whatever then the

late person will say well do you have a

like do you have an attendant then the monk is allowed to say who the attendant is

but for the sake of receiving money the rules are so strict that you you just cannot consent

to somebody keeping money for him so it's pretty tricky

um I mean if somebody let's say

let's say it's like this you're a monk

somebody comes up to you and says I'd

like to donate this money for your

behalf or for anything that you need

venerable sir then the monk says I don't

accept money that's what he's supposed

to say then then the light person if

they you know if they know about the

rules of monastic discipline will will
say do you have an attendant
and then you you can tell them who the
attendant is and then they'll like go
and give the money to the attendant I
mean that much is allowable
um especially if you're kind of you you
have like an aversion for money and
don't really feel good about about
people giving I mean really the only way
not to break rules with regard to money
it I mean almost the only way I'm sure
there's something who can do it but you
gotta just go out and live in the sticks
where everybody is so poor that they
can't even afford to offer you money and

I did that for for a while in Vermont
just go way out in some remote area
where

um yeah people didn't even have money to
offer

so

yeah it's

I mean you might want to read like ajan
to nisaro's book on the Buddhist
monastic code

and then I mean he he does have some
relatively lame loopholes in that book I
mean there's there's all these loopholes
there's so many things that are really
inconvenient for a monk and so there's
loopholes or for avoiding it in fact
there's a Burmese proverb that says we

need that jet dot which means if you're skillful at winning a you can kill a chicken because if you're skillful the rules of an asking discipline you know all the the loopholes and the ways around the rules so that you can do whatever whatever you want but um

yeah I mean if you really want to help a monk just find out who his attendant is and then just go to the attendant and give him the money and say this is for venerable so and so and if he needs anything you know you should give it to him

and the monk can say that if money was

given to an attendant and the Tenant just spent it you know on his own stuff he went to see a movie took a girl out to it on a date or something then it's the Monk's duty to go to inform the layperson that the the attendant just blew the money and the monk didn't get anything that he want that he needed that kind of a thing but it's very tricky it's like this Razor's Edge I've read at least three different attempts at explaining the Money Rules by three different monks Western monks and essentially what they're what they're explaining is how close can you get to handling money without actually breaking the rule

so it's it's very subtle and complicated
it's like a legal issue
but uh kind of Monk give why don't I
just answer the question here can a monk
give his assistance phone number to lay
people when he receives money from them
well he can't receive money from them so
the lay people can give the money to the
assistant and discuss them how to help
them out with the money if if you do it
without telling them to give them if you
say give the money to my attendant then
no it's the same as handling it yourself
you're not allowed to tell people what
to do with money but if they ask you who
your attendant is then you can tell them

who your tenant is even if you have your suspicions they're going to be giving him money for your behalf or some such but uh you shouldn't be too happy about it

so I'll just move on to vegan Samurai's next question here did the Buddha ever talk about group meditation and its benefits I think there's mention in the sut is of monks all sitting together meditating but I do not recall any sutas where he's specifically talking about the benefits of of meditating in a group as a general rule the Buddha was advising monks to just go out alone into a forest sit under a tree and meditate it was largely a solitary thing even

though in the suit as the Buddha is
accompanied by a retinue of 500 monks
but when it comes to meditating time
they wouldn't all meditate together
unless maybe the monks were all sitting
waiting for the Buddha to start
delivering a discourse and they might
all be sitting there meditating
um just to pass the time you know it's
their job you know before he starts
talking some of them might continue
meditating while he was talking
um

yeah but I'm unaware of any sutta
specifically describing the benefits of
meditating in a group as a general rule

um Buddhists were encouraged to find a place where they are alone and meditate that way although group meditation does have its benefits I mean I can vouch for that I've meditated in like retreat settings before and uh just having the the moral support of everyone around you you know they're all doing it too and it makes you less likely to just get tired and get up and walk away especially if you're the only one who gets tired and gets up and walks away you know is kind of you know shames your your family and your ancestors rolling in grave and that kind of thing or something so you know it can just sort of bruise

your your masculine Pride or whatever

so let's see

so I'll just move on to uh vegan

Samurai's next question here do you

think it would have been easy for you to

build a cult in Myanmar since the

villagers there already thought you were

special as a foreigner they thought they

weren't they weren't so

much of the opinion that are special

just because it was a foreigner they

they thought I was special mainly

because I was practicing strictly

whereas most Burmese monks don't like

most Burmese monks handle money they

might even go around asking for money

most Burmese monks you know they smoke
cigars and drink tea in the afternoon
and just hang around listening to the
radio and

um

you know I remember one time I was
living in a cave
in a forest it was it was a natural cave
just in this big forest and I had the
supporter from the village the nearby
Village this very very nice hillbilly
man who came to me and he was just in
this state of just wonders like I
couldn't live like you you don't drink
tea you don't smoke cigars
and it was like he was more impressed by
me not drinking tea or smoking cigars

then then by the fact that I was living
alone in that cave in a forest thousands
of miles away from from my home and
family

I do drink tea nowadays though
so

um but let's see that's not even the
question here do you think it would have
been easy for you to build a cult in
Myanmar well the villagers thought I was
special

and sometimes I would sort of jokingly
compare myself to Colonel Kurtz and
Apocalypse Now except without the heads
on polls you know so it kind of already
was a cult you know there'd be women

like spreading their scarves down on the ground for me to walk on and so forth um wasn't as Extreme as Tom poulosio the founder of my tradition where young women would actually get on their Knees line up his path and to spread their long hair out on the ground for him to walk on

yeah they didn't get that extreme with me but the thing is I couldn't really start a cult in Myanmar even if I wanted to which I didn't

but the thing is the Burmese they are so Orthodox in their Buddhism

that I would have to be Orthodox in my Buddhism or they think I was just an ignorant Foreigner you know to the

extent that I would deviate
from what the sutas and the commentaries
say you know so far as I deviate from
abhidham and the wisudi Maga then
I just would be considered ignorant
misguided perhaps you know they wouldn't
want to think too badly of me but the
guy he's just a foreigner and foreigners
can't really understand Dharma correctly
so it would have been easier for me to
start a cult in California where anybody
can start a cult practically

um

but I'm just not the cult leader type to
be a cult leader you have to be like a
Salesman like a huckster you have to you

have to be good at hype you know like
these televangelists who can't just say
the name Jesus in a regular tone of
voice it's got to come out like Jesus
and I just can't talk that way I can't
really

you know I don't want to deceive anybody
you know so I'd have to be essentially
like who I am right now in these q and
A's maybe this is the code you know I'm
gradually developing a following here
and and sooner or later you're going to
learn about the riddle of Steel and I
might just uh

you know have one or two of you walk off
Ledges just to show that see I
no that's I'm just joking just joking no

worries

just an old uh reference to Conan the
Barbarian there

and I can't turn into a giant snake
either so that's that makes it more
difficult to start a cult

but yeah it would be way easier to start
a cult in America like especially like
California then then in Myanmar

so we'll just move on to vegan Samurai's
next question

and I said that these are short
questions so I could answer all 12 of
them easily and then here I am just like
logo Ria

okay were you a materialist in your

early life and if yes what made you believe in the Supernatural no I've um maybe when you're a kid you know you're so naive that you're like a naive realist you know you just assume that everything is is the way it looks um maybe that could be called the materials you know sort of like a dog or a chicken you know they just assume that what they see is real um and later I mean I was really into science but still just intuitively from a very young age from from when I was a boy um I just could not believe that this is Ultimate Reality you know like as a teenager I start reading uh Eastern

philosophy and it's saying you know it's all an illusion and I'd be going yeah except I really didn't even understand why I just felt true to me and I'm more uh I got like more of a surreal kind of a mind you know it's like you know I mean I'm in a dream right now that's the way it's always kind of felt to me sometimes even now like I was doing some fairly sketchy stuff on a forklift a few days ago like picking up like really heavy beams and like maneuvering them around without smashing or destroying anything and it really is it struck me that you know the more dangerous it was is the more of a kind of a dream state

where it was just in this like dream
like flow where I was doing it
and uh yeah so I don't know maybe I was
a materialist when I was real young but
my father certainly was not a
materialist you know he was you know
he's telling me all these stories about
past lives and Witchcraft and astral
traveling and all this kind of stuff you
know from the time that I was really
small

that um yeah I've never been really a
hardcore materialist
so I'll just move on to vegan Samurai's
next question can you make a video with
the title pure land Buddhism exposed
well um a few months ago I did write a

blog post about pure land Buddhism and I never really thought about it much I mean I never had any interest in pure land Buddhism it just seemed clearly not what the Buddha really taught um but then on the Discord server there are at least two people probably more than two people who do take it seriously who think it's like a legit kind of Buddhism and so I've sort of been exposed to it mainly through that because I really never sought out pure land Buddhism or you know read any pure land books or um I accidentally went to a pure land our Niche red Monastery ones that was a

long time ago before I was a mom
so I mean if you want to know my honest
opinion about pure land Buddhism
probably your best bet would be to check
the blog and go back a few months I
guess I I should look this stuff up
um but you know go back a few months and
as pure land is in the title
but uh I didn't really don't want to
gratuitously offend the pure land
Buddhists I mean if they're going to try
and push pure land as legit to me then
yeah they might get some pushback but I
mean they want to go off and do their
thing you know they can be pure land
Buddhists or or gay or or whatever you
know satanists or or whatever and uh I'm

not going to be trying to evangelize
them or convert them or anything
so I'll just uh move on to vegan

Samurai's next question how oh wait no
how isn't even in the question here does
a Buddhist still have to respect his
parents to a high degree even if they
are horrible people well

I mean if there's just nothing
respectable about them I mean you pretty
much have to delude them delude yourself
to like really have respect for them but
nevertheless I mean you do have a duty
to your parents regardless you have
filial duty Buddhism teaches that it
says that even if I mean your parents

even if you carried them around on your back for the rest of their lives you still wouldn't repay the debt for them you know creating you as you are you know it's like it's because of them that you're here who you are and you might have problems that you consider to be they're doing or largely they're doing but uh still I mean you're not that bad of a person if you're sincerely seeking out Dharma and trying to practice Buddhism and so forth so they must have done something right um so you have a duty you know not to denigrate them you know not to despise them even if you can see clearly enough that you know your father is a crackhead

and your mother's a prostitute that I
mean still they're kind of doing the
best they can on the circumstances like
my mother

she was spiritually a child

um bless her heart you know I don't want
to bad mouth my own mama

but I mean she just didn't get it I mean
she was just a complete Normie you know
kind of like Peg Bundy on Married with
Children if you know who that was

and she did the best that she knew how I
mean she didn't know

I mean she and I were like on different
planets about the time that I reached
about the age of 13.

well she did she I mean she was she did
she did a conscientious job of being a
good mother and you know she wasn't a
bad mama

but uh you know when you get to you know
the crackhead and The Prostitute you
know at the very least you should try to
help them you know and just you know
still love them even if it's sort of
from a distance you know sending Mata to
them to try and like uplift them so that
they can be better people that kind of a
thing

so I mean you have a duty to sort of
look after your parents if you can
and uh you know try to help them if you
can

and if they're just so horrible that you
just can't be around them without you
know being attacked or or whatever then
uh

and just send the meta from a distance
and just hope hope they uh straighten
themselves out a little bit maybe see a
little glimmer of Truth before they die
so I'll just move on to vegan Samurai's
next question here do you believe it's
reasonable to mediate the most common
Buddhist typo there is is saying mediate
instead of meditate do you believe it's
reasonable to meditate while hearing
Monks chanting a home yeah that'd be
fine I mean I don't know Buddhist monks

who just chant ohm over and over again
maybe some hayana monks do you might be
more likely to find vedantist Monks
chanting home

but whoever it is I mean om is not a bad
Mantra I do owe myself sometimes
and just meditating on hearing like for
example you know it's like one of the
main meditation techniques of Tom
Feliciano who's the founder of my
tradition was just hearing mindfulness
of hearing and I was told that the
reason why he settled on hearing as one
of his main meditation techniques was he
lives in a forest and there's crickets
all night and so he would just sit there
and just the sound of the Crickets would

just be like permeating I mean just he'd
just be aware of hearing not identifying
it as crickets but just just the the
sound the the raw data of the sound
so to speak

so I'll just uh

move on to the vegan samurais and the
last question

uh how to deal with loneliness according
to you well in Buddhism being alone is
preferable you know especially if you're
a renunciant

um so with regard to loneliness I've I
mean I've been lonely for friends I've
been lonely for love in my life

um but

I think the best way to deal with it is like what I was saying earlier the Panacea in in Buddhism if you have any kind of mental state that is causing you unease

be mindful of it just observe it and then that of course creates a Detachment from in this case loneliness it's no longer I am lonely it's just you know you are loneliness is arising you know lonely feelings lonely mental states are arising and then you You observe those and then it removes much of its power and it stops reinforcing your karma because karma is just a kind of a momentum and if you feel lonely a lot you've got

this loneliness Karma that it's you know
it's kind of worn a Groove into your
brain or something so to speak and it
just happens again and again and the
more you kind of wallow in it the more
you reinforce it whereas the more you
just observe it with mindfulness and
don't identify with it just you're
depriving of increased momentum and it
gradually just will fade out or at least
become much more attenuated much much
weaker

so I mean I can't really I'm not the
sort of person that really feels lonely
a lot I mean I've been kind of a loner
my whole life and preferred it that way

mostly

um but

let's see how to deal with loneliness

yeah I mean that would be the standard

Buddhist way of doing it or I mean

another thing you could do is find a

friend or

or something like that just you know

join a group and uh at least you'll be

able to interact with people that way

so I think I'll just move on the next

question this is from hey it's TIG and

heyx Tig is a wise guy and uh this

question is is not really that wise

guyish of a question but it's what is

your favorite beverage and honestly I

don't think I have a favorite beverage

you know it's like different times
you're in a different mood you just eat
a piece of chocolate cake for example
and or if I do I want milk you know
there's some things that just go good
with milk

um like after a hot day I come home from
work and it's all just hot and I'm all
damp and sweaty and uh I mean
cold sweet tea is hard to beat
really it goes down really good like on
a hot day and you're all hot sweaty
but uh I mean in Burma I think my
favorite beverage was Red Bull
which is a different formula it looks
different it tastes different it's just

different like Asian Red Bull is
different from American Red Bull and
back when I first started drinking it
like in the early 90s I think it might
have been illegal in the west I heard
all kinds of horror stories about how
it's got nicotine in it and like
steroids and some kind of
amphetamine-like substance and I mean it
was it was it was like a pharmaceutical
cocktail or something
but I really liked it and if I drank
more than about three if I drink like
three cans or more I could just stay up
all night and meditate so that was about
the closest to drug use that I indulged
in for most of the time when I was a

monk was a Red Bull drinking
um and it's it's good for keeping you
from not being all sleepy and you know
it can't enhance your meditation to some
degree but in the in the west I really
don't have a favorite beverage as far as
I know if if I had to like choose like
you're only allowed to one drink one
thing for the rest of your life
that would be tough I mean I like coffee
you know with milk in it no sugar but I
mean you can't just drink only coffee I
maybe maybe a good cup of coffee might
be my favorite beverage but if I had to
just like settle on I could only drink
one thing for the rest of my life it

might be some sort of like watered-down
cranberry juice well it's maybe just a
little bit of sugar in it to sweeten it
up so it's not as stringent
something like that

so I think I'm just going to move on to
this question here this is from Raphael
46.

in Rafael 46 says how do pure land
Buddhists react when you confront them
with the fact that their sutras were
created much later

well I already mentioned that there are
at least two pure land Buddhists or at
least two people who take pure land
Buddhism seriously on on my Discord
server and there's only one who really

pushes back you know he just insists the Buddha really taught pure land Buddhism and and he was he's sort of you know he wants to believe that pure land Buddhism was real is really genuine which is understandable I mean if you're a pure land Buddhist you want to believe that pure land Buddhism is genuine Buddhism that you know go to My Buddha himself would have endorsed it and you point out that there's yeah it's not likely I mean he wants to believe like the the traditional Mahayana Buddhist assumption that the Buddha taught Mahayana but it was Kept Secret for hundreds of years and then

resurfaced you know hundreds of years
later uh I think the official uh
explanation is that uh in the Buddhist
time you know despite mahakazapan
getting the twirling flower Sutra or
discourse

um I mean if you don't understand what
I'm talking about that's fine but I mean
that was like the first transmission of
Mahayana one time the Buddha
um instead of speaking he just sat in
front of everybody and just twirled the
flower between his fingers saying
nothing and Maha Kosovo smiled because
mahakosava got it it was like a it was
like a Mahayana Buddhist
Spirit Trend like a Dharma transmission

or something and he would he became the
first patriarch concept or casiapa

but um pure land Buddhists they want to
believe that you know in the Buddhist
time the Buddha could see that people
just weren't Advanced enough to become
bodhisattvas or to understand

Mahayana and so it was like the Mahayana
text anachronistically were put in a
undersea Palace guarded by dragons
and that when

um

nagarjuna came along then they realized
that people were wise enough to
understand Mahayana and so the dragons
the nagas the Cobra dragons came out of

the sea with these projects texts
and presented them to nangarjuna
um needless to say I mean it's it's not
a very plausible story to a non-mahayana
Buddhist even most Mayana Buddhists like
the scholars admit that Mahayana just
didn't exist uh in the Buddhist time
that it developed hundreds of years
later

but I mean there's most of the people
who like pure land Buddhism on the
Discord server you know they kind of
consider the Discord server to be like
my gig

so to speak and you know they don't push
back you know they just appreciate what
I can say about like early Buddhism you

know it sort of expands their knowledge of what early Buddhism was like they can appreciate that there was only one person

um who he he would push back sometimes and so we'd sort of you'd be trying to explain how Mahayana Buddhism has been legit and taught by the historical Buddha even though he doesn't have much use for the historical mood he prefers like amitaba but um you know he's trying to

rationalize pure land Buddhism being like legit Dharma even though certain aspects of it are radically like at odds with many of the earliest teachings of

Buddhism and

I don't know it kind of got a little

heated at times

and uh

but uh I mean he's still a member of the

group he doesn't he doesn't uh

like say an awful lot lately but he's

still in the group so I mean I didn't

kick him out or anything

so I mean really the way they react is

either they don't care they just like it

you know it just sort of resonates with

them and so they just like it and still

pray to amitaba or whatever

or else uh you know they just sort of

get indignant if I'm trying to suggest

that pure land Buddhism is not real

Buddhism or Genuine it doesn't genuinely
represent what Buddhism was like when
Goda mobuda was alive
which is understandable I mean any yeah
you're bad mouthing someone's religion
you know you think it could be a
Christian or anything you know
especially if it's a faith-based belief
which pure land Buddhism clearly is it
seems to me and Christianity most
Christianity also is just very phase
based you have to believe the story that
to Outsiders it doesn't seem like a very
plausible kind of a story
but I mean if you say that it's not true
then of course they're going to start

getting uncomfortable and maybe if some of them will start getting a little hot under the collar and start pushing back and say that you're you're not right

you know I mean it's just the way it is so I think I'm just going to move on to the next question this is from the

Spanish Inquisition

so possibly just a representative of the Inquisition you know like the grand Inquisitor Mill it's probably too much to ask that the grand Inquisitor himself would ask this question

but the Spanish Inquisition says our right speech for monks and right speech for lay people the same

and for the most part they're the same

you know don't tell lies

um

don't bad-mouth people behind their back

because you know you want people to

dislike them you know don't bad mouth

people to their face you know using

abusive speech and you know don't waste

time with just meaningless chatter

so that's I mean that's essentially what

right speech is although for monks

there's additional

um because of the rules of monastic

discipline there's additional

limitations on white speech like a monk

who

let's say he's he's attained psychic

powers he's not allowed to tell

laypeople that he's attained psychic

powers even if it's true

if it's false and he lies about it he's

excommunicated immediately but even if

it's true it's a pachidia offense which

is an offense requiring commission uh

confession

uh an offensive intermediate severity

and so

um

I mean they're just more limitations

amongst not allowed to speak in private

with a woman especially if they're both

sitting down

um that sort of thing

um

probably a monk is uh

like

he's the amount of jokes he's allowed to

tell are more limited than a lay person

but uh ultimately I mean just the basic

idea of right speech is the same for

anybody for monks or lay people but just

because of the winning rules there are

certain rules of monastic discipline

that further restrict what a monk is

allowed to say or is not allowed to say

under certain circumstances

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

question here this is from ludovis

Balaam

and ludibus balam says if you had to

guess what would you imagine your
current Karma would lead you to as far
as rebirth goes feel free not to answer
this question because it's a bit
personal well I can't really say what my
rebirth would be assuming that there is
such a phenomenon as rebirth
which is a convenient hypothesis for
Buddhists
but I would assume that I would continue
with the momentum I've got now
so probably not so different from from
this I mean
um I'd be open-minded to getting into a
heaven Realm
you know maybe I'm making a lot of Merit
by the things that I have done

and maybe maybe I get to go to heaven or
if I get a human birth it probably
wouldn't you know it wouldn't be so much
different from the birth I've got now
um I'm pretty confident I wouldn't be
reborn in hell

although some people might think
differently about that doubt that I'd be
reborn as an animal or a Hungry Ghost or
an Asura

so

yeah I mean chances are that each of us
in our rebirth is going to be just
continuing on this trajectory we're on
now so if my trajectory is
um in a heavenwards direction and it's

hard to say for sure and it also is
going to depend a lot on you know my
last few moments before I die
that that's going to have an effect
so I mean you can
you can you can live a very pure life
and then like right at the moment of
death you're just like cursing and you
know maybe you're you know you got
really horrible mental States and that's
gonna like mess up your trajectory to
some degree or

um

like a person who's lived a life of this
evil and then right towards the moment
of death you know they see the light and
you know they've without a change of

heart I mean they still got all that Karma that they got to deal with but at least it's gonna kind of mess with their trajectory you know they might wind up you know relatively good realm but they still got lots and lots of problems something like that but with regarding myself see here I am digressing again um with regard to myself yeah I I really can't say I don't know we're just gonna have to find out when we get there but I would not be surprised if I'd be a human being again in more or less of a similar situation

to the one I'm in now or possibly a
heaven realm

um but it's hard to say

so I'm just going to move on to the next
question and this is the last question
by golly

and we're hitting right about two hours
so this is about standard I think and
this is from thermal squid and I really
like that name thermal squid just has
like a real nice ring to it

and thermal squid says would Nirvana not
be understood to be awareness or pure
mind in a provisional sense

seemingly we have to use words to
communicate these ideas and attempting
at spurring some experiential or private

understanding is Noble

so

would Nirvana not be understood as to be awareness or pure mind it wouldn't just be any kind of awareness you know like a dog is aware

to some degree a frog is aware of the fly in front of its you know flying past so I mean that wouldn't be considered Nirvana at least not in a anything remotely resembling an orthodox Buddhist especially terrible on a Buddhist uh context

pure mind I mean if you call it like perfect awareness or purified awareness then you're going to be getting closer

although even that Orthodox tarabada
would say no because awareness would be
like Consciousness and Nirvana is like
qualitatively radically different from
any kind of mental state
which makes it difficult to understand
how you could uh you know be aware of
even having attained it
so

um pure mind yeah that's like a a
standard Mahayana definition if not of
Nirvana itself than of like the Dharma
Kaya which is like you know the
pervasive absolute you know the one mind
so these kind of uh provisional
explanations of Nirvana would be more
mahayanist than Terra Vaden but I am a

heretical theravada and I really do think that in some respects not pure land but in in some other respects theravada

um misses the boat and in some ways

Mahayana gets it more correct like with regard to uh rejecting abhidham for example

just to give an obvious example

um they had a more sophisticated philosophy

um some of the Mahayana philosophers

just because they came later when like

uh formal logic and so forth had evolved to a higher degree than in the Buddhist time so they're able to be more

sophisticated in their philosophizing I
guess

but uh yeah it depends on like
who you talk to like what religious
context you were sort of uh dealing with
would Nirvana not be understood as
awareness or pure mind in a provisional
sense yeah I mean Orthodox
and the commentaries you would have to
be just a flat no with regard to Mayana
or in my opinion

um I mean just based on my own
understanding of dhamma then I mean
arguably you could say that nibana would
be like pure mind or pure awareness but
when you get to the absolute Purity
again it becomes paradoxical and you it

just like falls off the scale
so it's like samsara cannot contain
genuine Purity once you hit genuine
Purity it's it's not samsaric anymore
it's not in our world anymore it just
it's just off the scale so I mean you
can use it as skillful means maybe well
acknowledging that it's just sort of a
jerry-rigged attempt at just putting a
label on something or you know getting
getting your head wrapped around
something at least enough that you kind
of feel like you know it's not just the
random noise I don't know how to explain
it
uh skillful means as Mahayana Buddhists

say you know the purpose of Lord
Buddha's teaching is to liberate us from
our Thinking by means of our thinking
and uh yeah just saying that Nirvana is
pure awareness or pure mind perfected
awareness that would be like
Enlightenment I mean I would have no
problem with saying that Enlightenment
is the Perfection of awareness
the Perfection of wisdom
but that would not be orthodox
terravonna and so I have to you know
specify that I mean I might be willing
to go along with this as a kind of stop
Gap you know for lack of anything better
you can say because you're never gonna
really understand nibana intellectually

it's just not going to happen
and I guess I'm done I might as well be
done what the hell let's be done so
that's it that's that's the last
question and uh those of you have
questions

feel free to ask away in the comments
below if you have access to my Discord
server you can ask there if you have
access to my subscribe star which you're
welcome to join you can you can ask
there and uh do try to keep it to no
more than six questions per video
and uh feel free to like And subscribe
if you haven't already and look at the
URL links below and of course be happy

hello and welcome to episode 56 a
question and answer and I'm your host
Ponyo Bahasa

and because it's episode number 56 I was
considering having a on the thumbnail a
picture of a 56 Chevy because it has a
nostalgic value for me when I was a
teenager it was like my dream car or
just maybe not so much a dream cars I
didn't actually dream about it as just
you know it was just like my favorite
kind of car at the time but I never got
one and uh
probably just as well
and I'm feeling kind of low energy today
I think it's partly because of the

weather because it's just been kind of
Cloudy and dark and humid and warm and
still just windless out there
and I'm like a human barometer I'm
sensitive to climatic changes so
um nevertheless The Show Must Go On so
with the help of the caffeine in this
here sweet tea

I'm gonna commence to answering
questions I'm fixing on starting the
commence as I speak

foreign

so the first question is from
bodhisatta969 and bodhisatta 969 says
how could you be more than 20 years a
monk in Myanmar haven't you ever felt
lonely and abandoned

well I mean I'm a Loner by Nature I mean
I can have a mate and that's fine but
um yeah I generally tended to live alone
whenever possible
um over the course of my life and so
living alone in a cave in a foreign
country where nobody speaks English uh
it really was not that big of a deal to
me I've been sort of an introvert you
know my world is sort of internal
and especially as a monk I tended to
view what was going on on the outside
including people interacting with me
largely as just sort of stimuli
and so partly just because my own
personality quirks I really did not feel

lonely I mean there was a point around 2010 2011 where I was burning out on Burma but I lived in Burma for so long that my supporters in the west had pretty much just sort of gone their own way it just sort of drifted away there was I didn't really have access to Internet or anything like that in those days and so I mean Communications were very spotty at best and it just seemed like I was stuck in Burma so I kind of felt abandoned in that respect but it didn't make me feel sad so much it's just kind of frustrated and just sort of stubbornly intent on getting back to America regardless but um yeah I mean loneliness is really

not something that I experienced much of
boredom it's like the most bored I ever
was as a monk was generally when I was
having to sit through a long sermon
given by a Burmese Seattle
um or just having to sit through long
ceremonies that really I didn't have any
interest in at the time
so generally I'd be most bored when I
was with people instead of like alone
so yeah I mean it's just a personality
thing I guess it's one of the reasons
why I was able to be a monk for 30 years
is I just enjoy being alone
and uh
for the most part

um like human companionship like friends
coming over that sort of thing

um you know it's sort of like the it's
like a person's duty to be a good host
to offer good hospitality and so forth
and uh

but I mean if I had no friends
it probably wouldn't bother me all that
much

so I guess I guess I answered the
question I'll just move on to bodhisatta
969's next question here

which is was ajan mahabua an arahant
well

he was definitely considered to be in
our hunt by lots and lots of people in
Thailand especially although there are

people in Northwestern Burma who have
considered me to be in Aura hunt
so just because people think you're in
our heart

it doesn't necessarily mean all that
much

um I mean this this is sort of like a
little slice of a bigger question is
farther down so in a way I'll be
addressing this question
when I address a later question also but
I mean

I've never really known that much about
him I was more a Burmese Buddhist just I
was I mean I knew more about the Burmese
Seattle's you know the famous ones

rather than the famous Thai aajons
um he was considered to be an aroha he
was a disciple of ajan man I'm pretty
sure who also was considered to be an
aura hunt but ajan mahabua's biography
of ajanman is pretty strange I mean if
anjan mahabua was an arahan then arohans
can believe or at least endorse some
pretty weird ideas
and uh some relatively heretical ideas
like anjan man being visited by this
crowds of of long dead Buddhas and their
long dead Aura disciples just like
coming to to hang out with ajan mahabua
in his cabin at night
um
just lots of stuff that it's uh it's a

coin toss

and probably you're better off when you

toss the coin to just like toss it up

into like land on the other side of a

fence where you can't even see it

but I'll I'll be getting to that a

little later so it was on John mahabu on

aurahont

that's my answer he's just

yeah I think I'll probably be answering

that question a little better

um in a little while a little farther

down here so let's just move on to the

next question this is from maitreya

Buddha

in my Trio Buddha said have you

considered being a theology professor at
a university

well

um if I hadn't become a monk there is a
possibility a real possibility that I
could have wound up being like an
ecology Professor or some sort of
biology professor at a university and
probably an unemployed one at this point
because I'm just not politically correct
especially if I was a biology Professor
I would have even more reason not to
refer to guys as she for example
um and then I mean you just lose your
job regardless of tenure I mean if you
offend somebody who's like that
then uh yeah I mean

I mean it's it'd be a matter of
principles so I mean most universities
are like

like Marxist snake pits at this point
and I use the term Marxist rather

Loosely to include like

um Frankfurt School type progressivism

you know the culture of critique and all
that

so

um so there is that I mean Academia was

is just sort of like a leftist snake pit

at this point with with few exceptions

in the west

um also I mean a Buddhist wouldn't

really be a theology Professor I'm

pretty sure since theology is like the study of God

um you know sort of a religion professor of Buddhist studies or something but the whole academic attitude towards Buddhism is very different from the attitude I have had for the past several decades so yeah I don't think I'd really fit in there very well and also as some uh commenter to this question on the YouTube video pointed out I think you pretty much have to have at least a master's degree to be a theology Professor pretty much anywhere and uh I decided to become a monk rather than pursue my education so yeah I've never seriously considered

it

for for a variety of reasons

so um I think I'll just move on to the

next question here and this is from hits

TIG and hits TIG is kind of a wise guy

and so his TIG said what beers did you

drink when you were a lad has your

tasting beard changed over time do you

prefer any brands or types of beer such

as Stouts red ales ipas loggers Etc

so he's he's like trying to out out me I

think

just relying upon my own honesty to out

myself

because I do not keep five presets

perfectly largely because

I do drink the occasional alcoholic
beverage and uh

so what beers did I drink when I was a
ladwell

let's get into this my golly

um The Unofficial beer of my graduating
class at high school Schlitz Malt Liquor
which uh has died I don't think they
even make it anymore I think Schlitz got
bought out by some other company and
then the whole thing just went belly up
or something I have not seen any kind of
Schlitz

since I stopped being a monk and started
walking through grocery stores in the
West again

um when I was in college I drank kind of

a lot of Killian's Red Ale which was
good

and it was a little spendier than stuff
like Schlitz but it was worth it because
I really like the taste of it

um

if I was on an on a budget and wanted
just getting drunk cheap there was this
stuff called Old English 800 which came
in these like 40 ounce torpedoes
and just one of those would get you
pretty drunk beer was a lot weaker in
those days so old English 800 was like
six six percent and that was considered
really strong like the average beer was
like like less than four percent back in

those days I've noticed that beer has
gotten stronger
since I uh came back and started
drinking beer again
and then let's see bass pale ale I think
I used to say that if if God drank beer
he drank bass pale ale even though
technically beer and hail are different
but I haven't even seen that on the
market I'm sure they still make it in
England they just don't import much of
it into America anymore
so of all the beers that I used to drink
and enjoy when I was a elad
as his TIG says uh Killian's Red Ale is
the only one that uh I can still find
and there's just one place in town where

I can be relatively sure of finding it there I've noticed it at Walmart a few times but uh that usually they don't have any there so yeah I drank two of them last night and that's I mean that's about my my limit for the most part I usually don't drink more than about two beers which means I usually don't drink enough to actually feel any effects I just like drinking something that isn't sweet and isn't water and in the evening uh drinking coffee is not such a good idea because then I can't sleep at night so

um let's see do you prefer any brands or types of beers such as Stouts red ales

IPS loggers Etc I generally prefer
multi-beer to hoppy beer

so

um like Killian's ready it was good

um

gosh

yeah sort of like the the darker the
more aliar kind of stuff and the less
skunky stuff

I do drink ipas occasionally

excuse me

obviously anymore sweet team

um ipas they tend to have sort of like
the hoppy bite to it that

um something that Killian's doesn't have

but I'm open-minded I can drink just
about anything so long as it doesn't

taste like vinegar I drank some Belgian copper ale once

um when I was in college there was this place down the road called bullies that had beers of the world and and if you bought a beer you got this little card and if you bought every beer that was on the card you got a free shirt and so in order to get the free shirt

um I drank this Belgian copper ale it tasted pretty much like vinegar I don't know if it was supposed to taste that way or else they just nobody ordered it and it was just turning into vinegar on the shelf or something I don't know but of the beer that I enjoyed when I was

young that I'd still drink occasionally
is Killian's red which is good it's good
beer it's not extremely expensive either
so I'll just move on to the next
question

and this is from the Spanish Inquisition
and the Spanish Inquisition says for a
couple of years you have answered all
these questions from us viewers but if
you were to ask us one or two questions
the same one or two questions for all
your viewers over the years to answer
what would it be

well that's that's kind of a good
question I mean what would I ask
my questioners or my viewers and I guess
the big one for me would be if Mr Spock

from Star Trek and Kwai Chang came from
Kung Fu got in a fight who would win
I mean it's like the Vulcan or he's half
Vulcan technically but he counts as a
Vulcan he's supposed to have about twice
the physical physical strings of a human
being plus he's really intelligent so
he'd be good at strategizing and so
forth plus he's got like the Vulcan
nerve pinch
he's like a black belt and Kung Fu and
he's also got like the spiritual you
know he's just kind of in the moment and
everything
so I mean you could say that
if Kwai Chang didn't know about the

nerve pinch and Spock was able to get him by the shoulder then Spock would win but it's hard to say really so I mean if anyone knows definitively who would win you know if they've actually watched the fight um yeah I would like to know who would win between Spock and Kwai Chang Kane um there is one other question that haunted me for many years and now it's just academic because it doesn't really apply anymore but it used to be that they made light brown plain M Ms but not light brown peanut M M's and I used to wonder about that I had this my own theory that it was like a a combination of like uh

like the Coriolis effect and and

something else but

I don't know but it doesn't really

matter now I don't even care what the

answer is now

but

um questions to ask viewers

um

yeah that would be it I guess

so I'll just move on to the Spanish

inquisition's next question

I wonder if the Buddha would be Pro or

against vasectomy what do you think

well I mean he was calling the shots

with regard to the Sangha of ordained

renunciants and I mean a vasectomy would

just be redundant I mean if you're a
celibate you don't need a vasectomy
anyway

with regard to lay people I think the
Buddha really wouldn't care all that
much

I don't think he'd really adopt a
position Pro or against vasectomy
but who knows

yeah I really I really I mean Buddhism
is really just geared towards at least
it was geared towards celibate
renunciants and like it has very little
to say about marriage and childbearing
and so forth

um you know like like I said I think it
was the last q a that it's a very

serious offense for a monk even to
participate in a wedding ceremony
because and so in a Buddhist country
like Burma you don't go to the monastery
you don't go to a priest or anything
like that to get married you just go to
the Village head man and sign some
papers and then afterwards you have like
a reception where monks can be invited
and so forth where they will bless a
done deal

let's enjoy

but with regard to vasectomy

um

yeah I really don't think he would care
all that much one way or the other

unless there was some sort of you know
ancient Indian cultural thing but
vasectomies weren't an ancient Indian
cultural thing so I think I'll just move
on to the next question here this is
from covaksh and sipad zidana
and CEO of action
says in a previous q a you said that
from a non-materialist perspective being
unconscious can be explained by time
being a perception as well memories and
when you are unconscious you simply
don't have temporal perception or
memories of it does that mean you were
in nibbana while unconscious and don't
remember or is this layer of
unconsciousness even more deep than

nibana due to having no memory active or
time perception active although I heard
that nibana can't be an object of memory
either

so I don't know well first I would just
say that you're not in Nirvana I mean
nobody is in nibbana unless everybody's
in nibana regardless of how wiser
foolish they are just because nibbana is
reality

so

yeah so if you're unconscious it doesn't
mean that you're in nibana

um

I mean nibana is always there but you

I mean there's no you I mean I mean

subjectively there's no you to be
anywhere if you're completely
unconscious this is not talking about
sleep

because when you're asleep you're not
completely unconscious otherwise nobody
would be able to wake you up

you know I mean in order to be woken up
from a sound sleep you have to be able
to hear people or or the alarm you have
to hear something or feel yourself being
shaken or whatever

so being completely unconscious would be
more like being in a coma or being in
some deep you know anesthesia and and
even some anesthesia

um apparently you're not completely

unconscious especially if they don't
administer the right amount or something
so let's see I need to read this
question again

oh it can be ex unconscious being
unconscious can be explained by time
being a perception as well as memories
and when you are unconscious you simply
don't have temporal perception or
memories of it yeah that's I I endorse
that does that mean you were in nibana
while unconscious no because I mean
you're not anywhere subjectively because
I mean you are like a mental construct
that is has broken down while you're
unconscious it's just not there

um and is this layer of unconsciousness
even more deep than the bottom nothing
is more deep than nibana because nibana
is reality it's like absolute Ultimate
Reality that all this phenomenal stuff
including people in hospitals being
under anesthesia and so forth is part of
the dream

that may rely on the Ultimate Reality of
nibbana for its existence because you
can't have just a pure

like a pure illusion the illusion has to
be based on something

so I'm not sure if I answered this
question to his satisfaction

but um yeah it doesn't mean that anyone
who's unconscious is enlightened

although I mean I think there are probably some Mahayana Buddhists who would say something like that because they would say that trees and rocks are enlightened too because they're just pervaded with Ultimate Reality and there's no ego or anything like that obstructing it because that's the main thing that prevents us from being on it prevents us from being enlightened is just all this distracting symbols that we we pay attention to that and take it seriously and believe it and just kind of ignore the reality that that it's resting upon so to speak

let's see here

so I guess I answered that question

so I'll just uh move on to CEO of action

as next question here

what do you think when you what did you

think when you first heard the Twin

Towers were attacked while you were

among thousands of miles away who

renounced the world well I did remember

when I first heard about the Twin Towers

um like 9 11

2001 I was living in a cave in central

Burma

and these two Burmese guys came to visit

me

and one of them was going to tell me

something and then the other one said oh

don't tell him he might he might get sad
or depressed or something and then then
I guess between the three of us I don't
remember how it happened but they wound
up telling me anyway that some rich Arab
crashed a plane into the World Trade
Center and I mean that was all they said
really this rich Arab crashed a plane
into the the World Trade World Trade
Center and uh I was thinking well maybe
I mean a Cessna was loaded with
explosives and he used remote control or
something or I mean really I didn't have
a clear idea about it except for
gradually as time went by I kept hearing
more and more and then asked my mother

to send me some newspaper clippings
because they still had like newspapers
in those days and uh so she sent me an
equal number of news clippings about 9
11 and about the local high school being
burned down because uh when something I
mean something little that's close up
appears as big as something big that's
far away kind of a deal I think
so what did I think when the when I
first heard the Twin Towers were
attacked you know I was guessing maybe
some some rich Arab just uh crashed a
Cessna loaded with explosives using
remote control or something
and I really didn't know what to think
until gradually I got more and more

information

so I'll just move on to the next

question here this is from White Ash

Piper

and white ash Piper says during your

stay in Burma did you witness the

conflict between Muslims and Burmese

well I mean I wasn't present during any

race riots or anything like that the

closest I came

was I was staying

I think I was staying in a monster

called cheltsin doya which was maybe 15

miles away from the city of metila and

at the time when I was at chelseindoya

in metila I'm pretty sure it was maitila

there was uh

uh one of these it was like a riot that

happened and the story is that

um this Burmese Buddhist woman

tried to sell a gold hair comb to a

Muslim

um like a shop owner a guy who would be

like buying gold and silver and jewelry

and stuff and then reselling it or

whatever and she was asking for a

certain price for this gold hair comb

and he wouldn't give her the price but

then he he broke it like accidentally

and he just wouldn't pay her what she

wanted so they started having a fight

and there was a man a Burmese man with

her I think and it turned into like a

shoving match and then he got pushed down and then like the Muslims kind of got together and they're like fighting back and so you had this little brawl going on and then

the Burmese Buddhists left and

um you know their sort of rabble rousing and somehow a monk came with them I don't know if he was going to try and be a peacemaker or what but he went and he he said he wanted to talk with these Muslim guys they agreed and then they took him aside and according to the story I heard I was told this by a monk who who knew more about the story than I

did at the time he said they cut his neck which means either they cut his throat or they just cut his head all the way off or some such which then I mean when Burmese people I mean there's such a devout Buddhists if Muslims are going to start attacking or killing monks then yeah I mean all bets are off you're gonna have [__] hitting the fan big time probably even more so than when uh Burmese Buddhist girl allegedly gets raped by Muslims which that happened a lot too at least the alleged the allegation happened a lot so that was the closest I mean I was within about 15 miles of it happening and heard about it maybe a few weeks

later when I moved to a different
Monastery where the monk was
um well informed about the whole
Buddhist versus Muslim thing going on
but I didn't actually witness anything
other than you know newspapers and so
forth

so I think I'll just move on to the next
question here

after

having another simple sweet tea

and this is from Judge Caligula Bushman

and judge Caligula Bushman says

what's your opinion of Julius ivola's

doctrine of Awakening you did a review

of the book and had some criticism of

the sources he used well

um Julius Evola was

um

kind of a hard right like uh like a an

Italian fascist who was at least an

acquaintance with Mussolini gradually

soured on Italian fascism because he

thought it wasn't spiritual enough and

then he moved to Nazi Germany because he

thought German national socialism was

more spiritual he wrote a lot of

fascistic stuff he wrote

a lot of like sex magic stuff that is

still taken seriously even in some new

age circles and also he wrote at least

one book about Buddhism called the

doctrine of Awakening

and at the time I mean this is I don't
remember exactly when he wrote it back
in the 20s and 30s I think
um early 40s at the latest
um he was writing a book about Buddhism
and he was he was trying to portray it
as the the best spiritual system for the
Aryan Aristocrat living in in the west I
mean with regard to the the masses he
really didn't care what the common
person was following it didn't really
matter you know let them be Christians
or whatever it doesn't matter but but
like the the aristocracy you know the
people that really matter the people
that were so high up that they were you

know they had access to like spiritual Powers as well as Earthly powers or you know Heavenly Powers you know it's like his idea was that you know the highest level of being a human is you're the conduit of of the Gods of the higher spiritual powers to the rest of the world and so you have a greater responsibility to be benevolent and wise and so forth

um so he was trying to use Buddhism as a way of demonstrating I mean it's kind of nice I read it when I was a monk and um he was trying to portray the enlightened Buddhist arohaunt as sort of like the the nietzsian Superman which I mean is kind of interesting

um but for the most part his book
um it was it was intelligently written
it was well written that Evola was
definitely an intelligent person
but it was very similar to the sort of
Buddhist literature written by
westerners from like the early to mid
20th century where they have limited
sources like Julius Ebola he had a few
Italian translations I'm pretty sure he
didn't know hardly any poly he didn't
read from the original poly sources
so he relied upon sort of pioneering
works early translations of polytechs
into Italian and maybe into English also
especially the the majum and ikaya I

think was one of his main sources

and uh it's the sort of stuff that you

know it's

well written and everything but it's

it's

um

you know there's a limit there's a limit

to it about how deep it can go because

he really wasn't living the life he

wasn't really practicing dhamma

intensively although

um when he was a young man I think right

after World War one he was

um

like somewhat suicidal

and then he read a book about Buddhism

which inspired him and according to him

gave him a reason to live
and whether he considered himself a
Buddhist or not I don't know but he
definitely had respect for Buddhism and
advocated Buddhism as a kind of religion
or spiritual movement for the
aristocratic Aryan Elite
but uh and if you read it I mean you get
an interesting take it like an unusual
but still
you know reasonable take on terravonna
Buddhism as it would apply to the modern
West
which is is good I mean you learn a lot
about Buddhism especially if you don't
know a whole lot about Buddhism but uh

you should definitely read other sources
to get you know sort of a triangulation
you know different different points of
view on the same subject which is very
good for just about anything
but uh with regard to Buddhism it is
good to get a variety of points of view
and uh yeah it it does remind me a lot
of the earlier stuff like written by the
the contributors to the Polytech Society
for example
where I mean they're definitely
interested in the material and but they
held like this intellectual Academic Way
of trying to explain it and just because
of the approach to the material it
really didn't get very deep but for with

regard to like a superficial overview
plus as I say you know that the
perspective of
like Buddhism as kind of like a
um you know like um a spiritual system
for a fascistic master race or something
you know it's interesting
so I think I'll just move on to the next
question here and this is from Saint
sword
and Saint sword says what's the
graduation rate of terravonna Buddhism I
mean this as in how many fully
enlightened arahants have you met
well the easy answer to that is it's
hard to tell but he has more questions

here it says and please don't brush up
this question by saying it's hard to
tell it's not hard to tell I've met at
least two in my lifetime and you can
look into their eyes and tell that no
one is back there if it's hard to tell
that and then that just suggests the
number is zero which is fine

I rather hear zero as it's an honest
assessment I don't know if the
spirituality industry or honest this
seems like it would be a really
important question
and then he further adds I don't ask it
out of maliciousness I ask it as a
concerned consumer losing his mind with
this stuff I have a constant pendulum

swing from there's something to all of
this in the midst of the [_] to
this is all [_] and there's no help
for an honest Seeker that has zero
tolerances for [_]
so this is this is a deep question
and I doubt I've seen sword is going to
be very satisfied with my answer
but just for starters
well no I'll even before just for
starters he says he's met at least two
enlightened beings in his lifetime and
you can look into their eyes and tell
that no one is back there well
you can't tell if someone else is
enlightened unless you yourself are

enlightened

that's that's one thing I mean you can be sure someone's in line and there's a lot of those in Burma like I was saying there's a lot of people that consider me to be fully enlightened they just no doubt they just know it you can even tell them that you're not enlightened and they'll get like this really uncomfortable look on their face but then they'll just justify you saying that you know as you know and just continue believing it and so I mean there's lots of people considered to be enlightened um but here here's here's what I was going to say for starters that for

several episodes I've just been pounding
away at the idea that Nirvana is off the
scale that Nirvana it's invalid to say
that it exists invalid to say that it
doesn't exist invalid to say that it
does and doesn't exist invalid to say
that it neither does nor does not exist
there's nothing you can say about it
that is ultimately valid
so if Nirvana itself is like that what
do you say about a person who has
attained Nirvana

I think you would say in our hunt
I mean you can't say that an arhan
exists you can't say that aura hunt
doesn't exist you can't say that our

hunt does and doesn't exist you can't
say then our haunt neither does nor does
not exist

in fact there's one sutra on at least one
sutra where the Buddha is saying that
with regard to whether an enlightened
being exists or not after death I mean
you can't even say whether they exist or
not while they're alive

also this reminds me of some texts by a
group of Buddhist logicians

um it's called The Dignāga school or
sometimes it's called the Yogācāra
logicians uh whether they were really on
the Yogācāra lineage or not I don't
know it's Mahayana Buddhism I guess and
their classic example of a problematic

premise is a statement that cannot be
proven one way or the other is that
you know a person is enlightened or even
the enlightened beings exist
because there's no way of proving it
so

let's see I should just read this
question again here what's the
graduation rate of terravada Buddhism I
mean this as in how many fully
enlightened oral haunts have you met
well I'll just answer that question how
many fully in line or ons have I met I
honestly do not know
I honestly don't know maybe like in
Seattle I've met him he he was very

impressive

but whether he was an Aaron or not I
don't know and that also reminds me of
the statement by Rob Das where he's
saying that someone can go halfway
around the world and try to find an
enlightened Guru in the Himalaya
Mountains when the whole time back at
home Aunt Mabel has been fully
enlightened in fact except instead of
like telling him the secrets of the
universe she just says has have some
soup but as it turns out have some soup
is the perfect thing to say under the
circumstances
so let's see here I gotta
let's see if it's hard to tell then that

just suggests the number is zero
um not exactly because as I'm as I was
trying to say you know it's like if
Nirvana is off the scale and you can't
say whether it exists or not enlightened
beings who have attained Nirvana are off
the scale and you can't say whether they
exist or not it's like the famous
uh famous verse from the sudanipata you
know just as the a flame blown out by
force of wind you know comes to its
cessation and no longer subjects itself
to any designation even so the sage who
has freed himself from the massive names
goes to a cessation and no longer
subjects himself to any designation

so

I'm saying that the more cynical a

person is

then the less

openness towards the Paradox or the

miracle or or whatever you want to call

this Enlightenment which is just off the

scale and again you can't say whether it

exists or doesn't exist or does and

doesn't or neither does nor doesn't

so it's just like this it's like this

Paradox this this seeming Miracle this

inexplicable whatever

and if you're just completely closed off

to that then yeah the chances are

essentially a zero barring some miracle

like I've mentioned John Ren Lewis who

was kind of the the smugs scientific materialist type he was the leader of an a group of atheists for a while then he had a near-death experience just purely accidentally and uh it was like a a spiritually enlightening near-death experience and then he became like Eckhart Tolle and um whether he was claiming to be enlightened or not I don't know but he was claiming that I mean he was definitely permanently or you know

you know as a result of the near-death experience in this higher level of Consciousness where he is aware of essentially I don't know infinity or I I

don't want to miss misrepresent him I
don't remember exactly how it was that
he was always had access to it was a
higher level of consciousness
so you know setting aside somebody like
that I mean it's like the most
unenlightened people in the world in
certain sense are like the smug
scientific atheists who think you know
it's all [—] and I mean they would
just fight tooth and nail against any
evidence
or else just kind of smugly you know
shrug it off or whatever
and then it's like as you practice
spiritually
it's like

the openness to the very possibility of
the impossible Miracle gets wider and
wider and I mean seriously I think that
from a samsari context Enlightenment is
just meaningless I mean it's just off
the scale it doesn't mean anything
practically from a some sortic
definition or some sortic point of view
Enlightenment is it's just like [_]
it's it's just impossible
so I mean it's like
who who was considered to be fully
enlightened I mean
who wrote this really bizarre biography
of anjan man and I mean I really don't
know all the details uh Eckhart Tolle is

considered to be enlightened and he's married but I don't know of any like real scandals I haven't seen him acting in a completely unenlightened manner you got

Jed McKenna who was brought up by Saint sword himself who at the very least is a liar and extremely smug I mean in his books he's talking about how he lives in this certain place and you know he's got these these disciples that live there with him and that place just doesn't exist there's no pictures of Jed McKenna there's no interviews on the internet of Jed McKenna at least when I looked several years ago there was nothing I haven't been searching for Jim McKenna

lately and he's just like an egomaniac
he just brags and brags and brags about
how enlightened he is
and then so I mean Saints or seems to
consider Judd McKenna to be you know
sort of kind of a heavy hitter at least
he he seems that do to do that and
really I mean Jed McKenna is just uh
a complete question mark to me you got
Osho I mean I've read osho's books I've
heard some of his talks and you know
I've read some of the Scandal stuff
about Osho and
I mean he seemed more glib and wise I
mean he definitely has some Charisma
like the penetrating eyes and everything

they could and I mean he had to have
attained something
and I've met a few of his disciples I
asked him you think OSHA was enlightened
and at least one of them he just of
course he was in line it was just
plainly obvious
and uh the other one that I talked to he
was kind of non-committal he wouldn't
say he was or he wasn't
but I mean people that are considered to
be enlightened I mean you could even I
mean if we had detailed information on
the life of godama Buddha that I'm sure
there's stuff that you could come up
with saying yeah see look what he did or
you know so like in in the in the New

Testament you know Jesus is supposed to be the perfect man but you know he's he's like crying and and like uh like attacking the the money changers at the temple and driving driving out the people selling livestock for sacrifices and you know like uh what was it some knotted court or something using as a whip and you know he's hanging out with tax collectors and prostitutes and so forth and I mean you can find fault with anybody krishnamurti J krishnamurti you know he's he's considered to be an enlightened being but he was uh messing around with his private secretary's wife for years

so I mean it's like

whether a fully enlightened being I mean

within some sort of context whether it

even means anything

is questionable

but it's like the wiser a person gets

the more access or the more open they

are to this miracle so

um

it's like you can start calling somebody

anyway and it might kind of stick a

little bit

but really I'm I'm not at all sure that

an aura hunt can just objectively exist

regardless of what people are certain of

and and all this like neem curly bob up

there's another good example Haram Dasa

the better you got to know him the more
you realize there was just nobody there
he was just like a mirror reflecting
your own Karma back at you
but uh I mean his behavior was it going
with Orthodox Traditions it certainly
was not completely enlightened at all
times you know he'd be yelling and anger
and crying and laughing and like
literally punching people and just all
kinds of things and uh you know terrible
Buddhism says you know an enlightened
being wouldn't behave that way
so the whole thing is just this
mind-bending conundrum
and I really think that the more

spiritually Advanced you are the more
open you are to the possibility which
means you've got less of a closed door
to this

like inconceivable

miraculous paradox

and that's not much of a question but
then again we're dealing with something
that is off the scale if Nirvana is off
the scale then people who have attained
Nirvana that very attainment is off the
scale and again you can't say whether it
exists or doesn't exist or does and
doesn't or neither does nor doesn't it's
just

off the scale

and then you can't nail it down well did

this person attain what is off off the
scale it's like it doesn't work that way
so I'm just saying the wiser a person
gets the more advanced they get
the more open they are to
Ultimate Reality or the possibility of
Ultimate Reality or the possibility of
people calling like attributing
Enlightenment to them and it seeming
plausible
but I wouldn't be surprised if there has
ever been an enlightened being other
maybe Ramana I'm a harshi who is just a
pure 100
pristine Saint and Sage but even Ramana
maharshi I mean if you're uh like a

cynic you can make fun of him I mean he
he worshiped the hill arunachala he
wrote devotional hymns to this hill his
best friend was a cow
you know there's all kind I mean you can
just find fault with anybody
um if you've got like a cynical sort of
a spiritually closed mind
then yeah I mean you just got a shell
around yourself
but the more open you are then I mean
eventually
um like
again the the platform Sutra between
Nang says you know if you become in line
do you look around you see everyone
else's enlightened also so it's just uh

not so much a matter of whether other people are enlightened is just how much of a veil are you behind how much of a shell do you have around you and then whether there's it's like a critical mass or something it's like once the the veil gets thin enough then you know you can start saying maybe that person's enlightened or something but I think different people would have different like fitnesses of shell that they can still get away with sort of like

um

in taravana there is a tradition and you can find in the text that for the genre

is like the jumping off point to Enlightenment but then again there's also descriptions of monks that have any genre at all that still became enlightened so it's like that the amount of purity that you have to cultivate in your mind I mean some people need a lot of Purity in order to get to this nebulous miraculous Indescribable State others it can just happen to them like John ran Lewis or Eckhart Tolle or even Ramen amaharshi who just became enlightened supposedly allegedly according to his own testimony as the result of a panic attack he had as a high school student so

yeah I mean it's like wanting to pin
someone down with a like a concrete
objective yes or no question about
something that is completely off the
scale completely ambivalent just defying
any kind of logic that is just
paradoxical and miraculous
um it just doesn't work that way
so

I think saint-sword might be just as
much in the dark with regard to my
answer as before I started
but I mean if you can't say whether
Nirvana exists or not you can't say
whether people who have attained Nirvana
exist or not and within the samsara

context

it would sort of the answer would be
leaning even towards no
that within some sort there is no
nibhana and thus within samsara there
are no arahans

but you can get closer and closer I mean
you as you detach from samsara you know
you're holding some sorrow with a looser
and looser grip then you know these
miraculous possibilities become more
possible

but with regard to actual numbers there
are no actual numbers

so I think I'm just going to move on to
this question here that was an important
one though

so this next one is from rui and rui

says simple one Ponyo

thank you Ruby simple one Ponyo was

there anyone who was present at all the

Buddhist sermons

and then he says do you think beakers

were authorized to recite suffras to one

another during the life of the Buddha

and then he says did the whole retinue

of beakus move together with the Buddha

or did some groups remain at certain

locations and then he says three and a

half questions sorry about that

well was there anyone who was president

all the Buddha sermons the Buddha

himself was present at all of them but

nobody else was

but nobody else is present at all of the

Buddhist sermons

and uh see

do you think beakus were authorized to

recite sutras to one another during the

life of the Buddha

um I don't think there'd even be an

authorization involved you know you

wouldn't have to be checked out on you

know authorized certified you know they

wouldn't have a certificate or something

um it's like let's say the Buddha gave a

discourse to a group of monks and then

some newcomer monk comes in from

somewhere else and I don't think there'd

be anything at all against one of the

monks who heard the discourse telling
the other monks what the Buddha was
saying at the discourse that the other
monk missed I know or just yeah I'm sure
that it would be encouraged that if you
heard something in the Buddha you should
share it with other people that hadn't
heard that

uh ended the whole retinue of because
moved together with the Buddha or did
some groups remain at certain locations
this uh my answer to this will sort of
be my answer to uh uh was there anyone
who was president of all the Buddha
sermons it's like once one of the
Buddha's disciples I mean according to

tradition according to the suit isn't so far once he became enlightened he didn't need the Buddha anymore you know it's like the Buddhist part of the raft you know you use the raft to cross the flood once you get to the other side you don't need the raft anymore so the way it says in the text the Buddha I mean once once his disciples got enlightened he'd encourage them to go off and get their own disciples and you know spread the word you know it was it was uh more uh efficient effective way of spreading dhamma rather than having just all focused on this one guy because I mean the Buddha did not have any

uh Monopoly on legitimate genuine dama
so he would teach his disciples until
they were qualified to teach themselves
then off they'd go and and they'd teach
also and even before they were
enlightened you can see clearly enough
in the sutas that the Buddha would
encourage monks to just go off alone
into the forest to go alone like the
Horn of the rhinoceros to sit at the
root of a tree and meditate
and so

there was a lot of emphasis on just your
own

Reliance on yourself

and Solitude as it was a way of

cultivating emptiness

and uh of course once somebody became enlightened they really didn't need to hang out with a Buddha anymore they were in a sense of Buddha themselves

Buddha just means awakened

so see did I answer all these questions here was there anyone who was present at all the Buddhist sermon somebody might say oh what about Ananda was his attendant but Ananda wasn't his first attendant it wasn't his attendant until later on in the Buddha's life he did have attendance before Ananda so yeah I mean I I seriously doubt there was any monk who even attended most of

the Buddhas uh sermons

and with regard to the because being

authorized to recite sutras to one

another yeah I'm sure it was encouraged

so long as you know they got their facts

straight

and did the whole retinue of because

moved together with the Buddha no

it's like once I mean the ones that he

ordained might accept him as their

preceptor until he saw a fit to you know

tell them that they're on their own they

should just go off and do something else

I'm sure a lot of people a lot of monks

came to see him you know they wanted to

see the master you know there are

stories of like I think it's uh
sonakurikana maybe who uh he was
ordained under one of the the Buddha's
enlightened disciples in like a
relatively Southern Province and he'd
heard about the Buddha but he hadn't
seen him and so he wanted to go and meet
the Buddha after
um yeah I don't even think he was
enlightened yet I can't remember if he's
enlightened or not
but I'm sure it happened a lot but I'm
sure also the Buddha really did not want
you know thousands and thousands of
monks around especially because
um they were Beggars and so they're
gonna have to not be too much of a

burden on the surrounding householders

but neem curly bob out there he was a

guru

possibly enlightened if that even means

anything and uh he'd continually be

sending off his disciples you know go

you know go on this tour of of temples

in Southern India or go and listen to

krishnamurti who he called Ram murti and

uh I mean he'd always be like sending

them away because there was just too

much of an accumulation of disciples

just sort of making a crowd scene so

he'd be like dispersing them a lot and I

assume the Buddha did the same kind of

thing

so I think I'll just move on to the next question here and this is from Titus d ascentis

and Titus the ascent that says can a Buddha have bad breath and I was gonna look this up just to make sure that I remember correctly and I forgot to look it up

so

um in reality let's say objective reality can a Buddha have bad breath I don't see why not at the very least like morning breath I don't think that there's any Cosmic law preventing an enlightened being from having gum disease or something especially as they get older

but

there is a list I think it's the 80

lesser marks of the Maha Parisa of the

great man you've got the the well-known

32 marks of a great being

and then there's the lesser-known 80

marks 80 lesser marks of the great being

and I think one of those is like a sweet

breath

but those marks of the great being are a

later development they really cannot be

100 objectively True simply because some

of them are in conflict with others like

one person could not have all 32 marks

of a great man

at the same time

so traditionally I think the answer would be no a Buddha cannot have bad breath but personally I think there is the possibility at the very least he could have morning breath or something like that or maybe he ate garlic you know

so I'll just move on to uh Titus the assemphis's next question what is my opinion of Rasputin

well

I really don't know a whole lot about Rasputin he was like a heretical Greek Orthodox priest I think he he was uh uh starrette which is a word I was unfamiliar with until I read the brothers karamazov because father zosuma

in the novel is a starrettes it's sort of like a an Orthodox Christian Guru and apparently he was heretical in the sense that he was sort of like the Brethren of the free spirit where they had this idea that

um

to be forgiven your sins is a great miracle and so the more sins you've got to be forgiven the greater and more glorious the miracle is and so according I mean this might not be true but I have read or heard that Rasputin did engage in like orgies like sexual orgies and so forth as sort of like the the spirit of God is sort of permeating everybody and

there's no more good or evil and
everything is everyone's just going for
it and if they did do anything wrong
then they're forgiven and then that it's
more glory for God or whatever but I
think

the thing that's mainly known about
Rasputin aside from the movie Hellboy we
don't need to worry about that is
um he had like a hypnotic effect on the
wife of the Czar the last the Czar of
Russia of yeah the last Czar of Russia
and uh he had a calming effect on the
boy their son who was heir to be
be the Czar if he hadn't been murdered
by the Bolsheviks
um and he had hemophilia and so he had

like painful internal bleeding and so forth and Rasputin had like this hypnotic effect on the boy that could calm him down and alleviate the pain to some degree which caused the mother and to some degree the Father the Czar also have this like emotional dependency on Rasputin and maybe he was also giving political advice that presumably was because he was eventually um executed or assassinated and he was very hard to kill I mean they they poisoned him and that wasn't working then they shot him I think they stabbed him several times and they threw him into a river and then he didn't drown he

was still alive they found him washed up
on the on the riverbank farther down and
they finally managed to kill him
according to the legend

um so really I mean he was just another
you know in a way kind of like an Osho
figure

Maybe

but I don't know enough about him
especially with regard to his spiritual
attainments if any you know what he was
able to do or not do

but uh I mean I do not have a secret
name for my generative organ but if I
did it would probably be Rasputin
so I'm just going to move on to the next
question here

and this is from Yugo

and Yugo asked the interesting question

can you tell me if ignorance is

intentional or unintentional

and

it depends on what kind of ignorance it

is like if it's ignorance of Spanish

well I mean you can

let's let's say you have the opportunity

to study Spanish in school and you

decided to go for French instead then

your ignorance of Spanish would be

intentional because you freely chose not

to study it so that kind of ignorance

you know you have the opportunity to

learn something and you deliberately

turn it down then yeah that would be a kind of deliberate ignorance but ignorance in like the metaphysical or ethical or spiritual sense of like moha you know Loba Dosa you know gree hate delusion as as it generally is goes um or avija which is like spiritual ignorance then

it's not really intentional because you can't really be aware of it to the extent that you are aware of your moha it's not moha anymore so we're going to be mindful

you can be mindful of like attraction or lobot

you can be mindful of a version or Dosa but you can't really be mindful of moha

which is delusion or ignorance because
to the extent that you're aware of it
you're not deluded or ignorant to that
same extent

so you can be mindful of the first two
you know Loba and Dosa but to be mindful
of moha is practically impossible

so that's something you always have to
be careful about because you don't know
how delusional you are nobody does

I mean nobody knows how delusion obey
themselves are they might know how
delusional you are to some degree

not that I'm picking on you here

so that is a good point though because
it's something that should be brought up

that you really can't know

how much moha or avija you've got in

in like a spiritual sense

because you just practically by

definition you cannot be aware of it if

you are aware of it then it wouldn't be

Mohawk anymore

so

uh so with regard to the question can

you tell me if ignorance is intentional

or unintentional then yes or no

depending on what kind of ignorance it

is

and I mean even some spiritual ignorance

I mean it can be intentional in the fact

that you know you have the choice to you

know live a spiritual life or just

follow along in your Father's Footsteps
of of being a a pimp or something and
you just go the other route I mean you
know in a way that would be intentional
but I mean actually having delusion or
or a video

um I mean you can't be aware of it at
the time I mean in retrospect you can
think boy I was really foolish then but
while it's happening to the extent
you're aware of it it's then you you've
kind of transmuted it into into wisdom
like one of my favorite verses from the
uh the dhamapada is uh
the fool who is aware of his own
foolishness is at least wise to that

extent but the fool who is who considers
himself wise is called a fool indeed
so being aware of your own foolishness
is actually wisdom

go figure

so you go to this next question is

lately I burdened my mind with organized
religion being raised in one I really
cannot let go of having resentment for
it how do I deal with it thank you

well I think it was the very

very last q a before this one where I'm
talking about any kind of like

problematic Troublesome mental state

uh the Panacea in Buddhism is just be
mindful of it just deserve it and by
observing it

you know you're observing resentment
it's no longer I am resentful it's
resentment is arising you know you are
the one who's observing the resentment
if you are anything at all you're not
the thing that's being observed
so by being mindful of the resentment
just observing it realizing it's just
this mental state that's arising through
force of habit Karma
um that is not you that it might not be
particularly wise it's just this
habitual emotional thing that's coming
up and you can just watch it and if you
make a regular practice of that then you
weaken it you know you stop reinforcing

it but you know wallowing it anymore
you're just kind of keeping it at arm's
length you know keeping this
philosophical Detachment
um between you and it so to speak
so that would be just the standard
Buddhist way of going about it
and uh I mean it's not all bad that
organized religion
uh that you're brought up in organized
religion because it got you where you
are today and you are apparently seeking
dhamma you're trying to understand the
truth trying to cultivate some wisdom so
it's not all bad
there's some people that just say all
religion is just attempts at like

controlling the masses and so forth and
it's just like oh I mean it's like this
Doctrine for them it's it's like this
law they can't snap out of it that all
religion is bad it's the worst thing in
the world you know more suffering has
been caused by organized religion than
anything else and they're just
in a way they're they're like these
materialistic atheists who are like the
most foolish of people in that they're
just completely closed off to anything
higher than that you know you talk about
like the Roman Catholic church and a lot
of people think it's just evil is just a
bunch of pedophiles this bunch of gay

priests molesting boys and they don't
see anything beyond that
you know we don't see anything beyond
just you know the most scandalous the
lowest creepiest most foolish level and
there have been like really Advanced
Catholics Saints St John of the cross I
mean he might have been fully
enlightened assuming that Enlightenment
even means anything
so and he considered his teacher Saint
Teresa of Avila also to have reached the
stage of perfection
so
I think I'll just move on to this
question here I hope I answered that one
though

and this is from keep the vinia

and I I think this was a vegan skeptic I
think he changed his name to cryptovenia
and so

um he uh very kindly asked only six
questions this time

that's good I mean not that it was bad
that he asked more than six last time
but once I requested
that you know you don't ask more than
six questions per video he was on the
ball he has what it takes

and so Keith Lavinia says don't you
think it's pathetic to live an
aesthetical life just to hope to screw
some girls later in heaven this

completely contradicts the idea of
ending suffering by stopping Desiring
things shouldn't among do what he does
because he has realized how delusional
and primitive worldly pleasures are well
this is uh I think

this is probably a result of a video I
did recently with Brian Roo and Brian
wanted to do some clickbaity video about
sex in heaven and how finding out how
how like really nice even or jiaistically
pleasurable some Buddhist Heaven Realms
are that it might encourage people to
strive uh along a Buddhist path in order
to get up to those Celestial nymphs
but um I did point out that I mean even
though the Buddha himself used this

according to tradition that uh he

actually

um allured his half-brother Nanda not

Ananda but just Nanda on his wedding day

he he showed him visions of what the

celestial nymphs look like in heaven and

comparing that to you know the woman he

was going to marry this mere human

mortal woman you know she looked like a

monkey compared to these Celestial

nymphs in heaven and it for some I mean

Nanda must have been like a horny boy so

that was enough to persuade him you know

plus you know anything else you know the

Buddhism Charisma and so forth

um it persuaded him not to get married

he jilted his bride on the way on his
wedding day and jilted his fiancée and
was ordained as a monk

um but then see the thing is so Nanda
was ordained because he wanted those
Celestial nymphs in heaven but as he
practiced correctly his wisdom improved
and then he started seeing that samsara
is not something to be striving for that
that uh I mean it's you should just let
go of all that and so he did and he
became enlightened he became one of the
Buddha's enlightened disciples according
to tradition again assuming that a fully
enlightened being even means anything
within a song Sorry context
so yeah it's like you can use crude

motivations to get you started in dhamma
and then if you're practicing Dharma
correctly your wisdom will improve and
so your motivations will improve you
know it's just as your wisdom increases
the wisdom of your your motives also
increase and so you can move away from
that so it can be like what the Mahayana
Buddha is called skillful means where
you're just getting someone on the path
in whatever way that it takes and then
as they get after they get on the path
then they're going to make progress and
then they're just going to outgrow their
original foolish reasons you know a lot
of people it's not just sex with

Celestial and that's a lot of people
want psychic powers you know they're
they're practicing meditation because
they want to be able to levitate and
read minds and all this kind of stuff
and again if if they're doing it wisely
then their motives become wiser you know
if they're practicing correctly you know
they're meditating correctly and
everything then gradually you know they
just see the Folly of all that and they
just let it all go

so yeah

but I mean Celestial nymphs in heaven I
mean

it's the infinite universe so I guess
they must be up there

for those of you who are into that sort of thing so I'll just move on to keep
luinia's next question here would it be best for parents to send their child to a monastery when he is a little older so that it does not come into contact with this corrupt World well it sounds good it doesn't always work that way I mean if you're sending kids that have no spiritual inclinations to a monastery then it's going to be like a prison for them they're not going to like it it's going to be like the beings that wind up in this high heaven realm when the material universe is destroyed and they're up in this very Advanced Heaven

realm that's above the material world
and they can't stand it it's just so
boring their board stiff
and it's it's I remember the story I
mean this this I was involved in this
I was at this big school monster in the
city of amrapura next to Mandalay
and there was this nun
and she had had a son before she became
a nun she became a nun and so
um she just sent her little kid who was
like five years old to a monastery she
was just determined he was going to grow
up and be a monk this little kid he was
called a posted though he was too young
even to be a novice and so he was
dressed in Hawaii he had his head shaved

and he would handle the money because even novices aren't supposed to handle money and so he was sort of like one of the attendants to the monks and he just wanted to be a little kid I mean he did not he he was not there because he wanted to be there he was there because his religious Mama sent him there and one day the one of the Seattles one of the senior monks gave him some money and had him going or told him to get some money and get some rubber bands you know monks are always Burmese monks are always telling the attendants what to do with money which is the same as the monk handling himself that's a different

issue

so I mean the monk wasn't entirely within the rules by telling this kid to go and buy rubber bands but the kid took the money and instead of buying the rubber bands he went to see a movie he wanted to see a movie so he went to see the movie he spent all the money on on seeing the movie plus whatever it is popped rice or whatever that Burmese people eat at movies and then uh he was afraid to come back because he figured he'd get punished so he went and lived under a bridge with these homeless people and they took his clothes and sold them and he was just wearing these rags and my T one of my

teachers was responsible for this kid
and so every day he's out scouring the
city of of amrapura looking for this
little kid finally after a number of
weeks he finds him at this tea shop it
was like one of the the hobos gave him a
little bit of money to go and buy some
cigars for him in a tea shop and the
lady that worked at the tea shop had
pity on him and so she let him stay at
the tea shop and he was like you know
helping to clear tables or whatever
so the kid finally got brought back and
uh The Story Goes that he was sent to
his nun mama and the the Mother Superior
of the of the nunnery just like tied

into a post and just whipped him

mercilessly

because of all the trouble he had caused

but it means sending someone into a

spiritual environment if they just you

know they're just not spiritually

motivated to be there is not the best

thing you can do so let's see here would

it be best for parents to send their

child to a monastery when he is a little

older so that it does not come into

contact with this corrupt World why not

just keep him at home and teach him the

way you see fit and if you're living in

some City thin City with gangs and so

forth around you just move out into the

country move into a conservative small

town or something where it won't be so bad

but if the kid does have some spiritual yearnings or something then maybe

but um yeah even like Catholic schools uh when I was a

when I was growing up in Aberdeen

Washington and it was all public schools except through this one St Mary's

Catholic School which went up to eighth grade and then once they graduated from

the eighth grade they'd come over to the public the Junior High in the high

school and I mean they had a reputation for being just the most hardened

juvenile delinquents which I think is

somewhat similar to to what I've just
been talking about where you put a kid
into this religious setting and the kid
just does not have religious
inclinations you know he's just ignore
me he just wants to be a kid like trying
to force them to be this way they'll
just Rebel and push back the other way
I think my sweetheart was like that to
some degree when she was in a Catholic
school as a teenager
so I think I'll just uh
move on to uh
keep divinia's next question here
and he says
is it allowed to buy a monk robe as a
layperson so I can meditate with it at

home so I'm already used to it if I will
be a monk

well there's no rules against buying
Monk's robes or making monks robes if
you want them made according to winnia
you probably have to make them yourself
um and wearing them but you can't pass
yourself off as a monk if you wear the
robes shave your head and then like try
to blend in with other monks and don't
tell them that you're not a monk that's
wearing the robes by theft and then you
are forbidden from being ordained for
the rest of your life in a way it's it's
sort of like a pre-paragica
and I think some of the uh bikinis

nowadays should be careful about sort of
thing

but we need we need to wallow in that
issue

so let's see here

yeah I mean you can wear a monks Rob at

home I've worn my monk robe my upper

robe at least once or twice since I

disrobed just to show how it's done

so I mean it's not like there's any kind

of spiritual law against wearing monks

robes if you're not a monk in the

Buddhist time everybody wore that kind

of robe it's just that they mostly wore

white ones that were all in one piece

instead of brown ones that had been cut

up were and sewn together or just made

of Rags that were selling together
so yeah you can uh you can put on Monk's
robes just to get used to wearing most
robes if you want to as long as you're
not trying to pass yourself off as an
ordained monk if you're not one
so I'll just move on to keep the
winnia's next question here is it
obligatory for a monk to answer a
layperson's question about the Dharma no
he doesn't have to answer questions if
he doesn't want to he does sort of have
a duty to answer people's questions
about dhamma especially on uposita day
you know the full moon day the half moon
days the new moon day

um you know he does have somewhat of a responsibility for guiding lay people they come to him in good faith but I mean if they're not respectful of dhamma he's not only not under an obligation to answer their questions but he's actually forbidden to answer their questions if they're just being you know they're being sarcastic and disrespectful you know asking these leading sarcastic cynical kind of questions or you know it could be some Soldier who's got a gun in his hands asking questions you tell him take your shoes off take your hat off Put the gun down and and I'll answer your questions you sure respect for dhamma then then I'll shirodama

so yeah I mean it's not any kind of rule
that I mean some monks they just avoid
people and just live out in the woods
and uh there there is a sutta I think
it's the greater discourse on voidness
in the in the Majjhima Nikaya where it
does say that a monk
um and the only thing he's he should say
to lay people is just politely asking
them to go away
if they come to him you know when he's
in the forest or whatever
so it's it's not required although some
suttas do indicate that you do have kind
of a responsibility to guide the lay
people because you're the one who's

cultivating the wisdom you should share
the wisdom to some degree not so much
that you're just being harassed with
visitors all the time you know you do
have to emphasize you know solitary
practice and quiet peace meditation
but um

so it's it's good to answer questions if
you can

but not so much so that you don't have
time for for serious Dharma practice and
uh again if they're being disrespectful
to dhamma or to you as the
representative of it then uh yeah you
shouldn't answer their questions you
should tell them yeah act in a more
respectful Manner and then I can answer

your questions

so I'll just move on to keep doing this

next question here is a monk allowed to

wear socks inside of a monster

technically a monk is not allowed to

wear socks period

a monk is not allowed to wear Layman's

clothing so he's allowed to wear three

robes

and really that's that's in the belt to

hold the lower robe on and that's really

the technical I mean strictly speaking

that is it

I don't know if they've got special monk

socks I know they've got special monk

vests and so forth there's a thing

called an antiguite and they wear them a lot in Thailand too I don't know what the name is for them in Thailand but it's it's like a vest some of them only have like one shoulder it's like a sort of like a tank top with only one strap that you can wear under your robe and a lot of monks if they're doing work outside like uh you know raking leaves or something they'll just wear that and not not bother wearing the upper robe but it was so hot I'd just go bare chested inside the monastery um let's see here what is a monk allowed to wear socks inside of moiser technically a monk is not allowed to wear socks if he's living

in like Denmark or or Canada where where
it's like well below freezing in the
wintertime yeah it might be willing it
might be a good idea for him to take the
hit just so that he doesn't get frostbit
toes and start losing toes

all right

so uh I think I'll just move on to keep
winning his next question here

would it be against the dhamma if the
Burmese stop the islamiz is it

islamization of their country by not
harming the Muslims physically like for
example by destroying their mosques at
night when they are empty

well I mean destroying a mosque at night

when it's empty you know it's not
killing anybody but you're destroying
somebody else's property which is
yep

pretty much like stealing you know
you're depriving them of their property
deliberately

so yeah that's burning mosques is also
not a good Buddhist uh ethical way of
minimizing Islam

so

let's see yeah I mean the Burmese could
stop all right try to stop the
islamization of their country is
islamization

um by not harming the Muslim physically
yeah I mean that's what they should do

and there's different ways of going

about it I remember

um that same monk that was telling me

about uh the uh the riot in metila where

the the Muslims cut the Monk's neck

uh he was he was actually involved and

there was a Muslim school that was

started up just like a block from our

monastery

and it turned out that they didn't have

the permits and everything you know they

just went ahead and built it and so he

and this other monk actually reported

this place and had it shut down just

because it was they opened it illegally

so I mean that kind of thing or just you

know informing the people not
rabble-rousing you know not like
spreading hate or anything like that but
just you know educating the people and
you know advising them to do some
peaceful non-cooperation or some such
yeah that's about all you could really
do as a Buddhist I think not in sen meta
so I think I'll just uh move on to the
next question this is from Austin
and Austin says the mind is so
fascinating how it can twist your inner
dialogue into a nightmare and yet even
with me knowing this
knowing the conditioned existence of it
all

I still can't seem to put my depression

aside any tips thank you yeah depression
is a difficult one I mean I've got
depression

um like genetically from both sides of
the family but I've got people on both
sides of my family that were prone to
chronic depression including my mother
and including my father's father

um so I do have some experience with
that I have I have undergone some
considerable bouts of depression in my
life none real recently lately uh which
is good it it's like recently it's you
can just feel yourself being sort of
contracted or expanded you know my mind
does kind of expand and contract but

um the more mindfulness you practice the more you can see the early warning signs so to speak and do something about it but I know for a fact it's like if you're depressed and your mind is contracted your meditation sucks worse than any other time you know the more expanded you are the easier meditation is and you know you can be mindful of mental States more easily mindful of anything more easily but when you get into this contracted state of depression then just trying to concentrate is like trying to balance some marble on the tip of a sharpened pencil it just doesn't work and so the time when you need it the

most might be the time when it's most
difficult to be mindful

so I mean I do have certain things like
in the past if I'd start feeling
depressed just sleep a little more and
always accomplish something positive
every day it doesn't have to be anything
important you can just be like cleaning
your room washing the dishes just do
something constructive and positive
every day and just keep reminding
yourself that you know it's not me it's
like a contracted mental state
and don't take I mean just be aware
you're in a contracted or depressed
mental state and don't take the thoughts

that arise too seriously I mean you
should never take them fully seriously
anyway just because they're not you you
know they're just mental States arising
through the force of karma or whatever
so so uh

yeah just be mindful to the best you can
maybe sleep a little extra if you can
and uh you know always accomplish
something positive that day
and try your best not to take it out on
anybody else

you know if you're in a bad mood you
know it's like when I'm in a bad mood I
just try to like mind my own business I
become quiet you know I don't want to
like vent on anybody else or take it out

on anybody else

but aside from that I mean to the extent that you could be mindful of it you know it's like in the mahasari patana suta it does say that you know when your mind is expanded you know it's expanded when your mind is contracted you know it's contracted and that's mindfulness you know even if you know that you're not being very mindful that's still mindfulness is sort of like what I was saying earlier to to the extent that you know that you have delusion to that same extent is not in delusion anymore it might still be illusion but so I mean yeah I do feel for you and uh I hope

that your depression lifts and when your depression does lift and you're able to to practice better and then that's the time to do it because sometimes when you need it the most it's the times when you can do it so it's good to be like in the habit so that you've got like this armor to protect you

and uh I used I was really depressed if you once as a junior mom because it's uh and then once I'd been a monk for about 10 years and that was like the last really bad depression that I went through

that I can remember

so good luck to you sir and I'll move on to the next question this is from SS

and SS says I almost said SS stands for
but it's it's like somebody's initials
it's it's nothing it's nothing uh nasai
so SS says regarding that part where
Ponyo says that the Hindu Buddhist
Heavens are like Celestial versions of
Indian palaces and shakya muni's time one
view would be to claim that these Realms
don't exist that they're products of
their culture projecting their values
into the Afterlife another would be to
say that they exist aren't exactly like
that but we're so described to Indians
as a skillful means I know there's still
that they exist are exactly like that
and even non-indian converts will wind

up in a very Indian coded heaven after they die some would find it odd that people living on a different planet in a different culpa for instance would be reborn in a heaven resembling Iron Age India or a Heavenly Jerusalem or any Earthbound culturally specific heaven for that matter a fourth I think possible of you would be the heavens exist but don't have a definite form they are rather constructed by the Collective Karma of the aspirants and resemble that to which they aspire to thus Indian Heaven would appear Indian Etc they are real places as far as real goes in samsara to those born there not solipsistic dreams their form is stable

cannot be changed at will like a lucid dream as the dev is delighting in their Creations might be able to do in their own Realms and exist for a very long time I think swedenborg has a similar account it's all speculation but we are talking about sex in heaven after all anyway what do you think so this was a comment under my sex in Heaven video which was that clickbaity one I did with Brian because he wanted to do a clickbaity one with like titties and stuff in it I can guess so yeah I think uh SS is onto something here like

um

one view would be that claim that these
Realms don't exist at all their products
of their closer protecting their values
are in the afterlife

um yeah I I wouldn't I wouldn't endorse
that one that's what the the cynical
materialists would endorse I suppose or
members of other religions who say only
our Heaven is the real heaven some they
might say something like that so another
would be to say that they exist aren't
exactly like that but were so described
to Indians as a skillful means yeah I
think there is some truth to that one
that I mean you can say that there are
Heaven Realms there are there are Realms
or modes of existence higher than the

human mode or the human level

I mean that's that shouldn't be too hard to swallow considering the universe is infinite not just the astronomical universe but you know the universe which contains all astronomical universes and everything else

so

yeah there's going to be an infinite number of of higher levels than ours so let's see another still they exist or exactly like that and even non-indian converts will wind up in a very Indian coded heaven after they die yeah I don't think so

so and then the fourth which SS thinks

is possible would be the heavens exist
but don't have a definite form they are
rather constructed by the collective
Karma of the aspirants and resemble that
to which they aspire to thus Indian
Heaven would appear Indian Etc they're
real places as far as Rio goes in
samsara to those born there Etc yeah I
think that's that's possible too I think
two and four here are both valid and
correct to a large degree

so

yeah I think it's sort of like
near-death experiences you have a
near-death experience where there's sort
of like the stereotype where you find
you you know you're almost dead you know

you're drowning you've been in a
motorcycle accident you're on a hospital
table under you know being operated on
whatever it is
and then you you realize that you're
floating up above the the body your own
body you're looking down seeing the the
body lying there and then you just float
up you might spend some time looking
around and noticing things that you can
then recount when you come back and then
you can go up towards this bright light
and then you go through the light and
then when you go through the light you
find yourself in like this Heaven realm
with a guide there and the guide if not

an old friend or relative is going to be
some religious figure
from your own religion as you're
generally going to see
kind of it's going to be like a dream
world where it's like your own
expectations are being projected into
this world
and I think Heaven Realms can be that
way too
that I mean any realm I mean even our
realm you know it's like there there
could be all sorts of different possible
uh Realms at this at this level you know
where you have the same you know level
of Consciousness approximately as a
human and there's I mean there's lots of

variation even among individual humans
so because of our karmic predisposition
we were just born into this particular
version but it's no more necessarily
materialistic than the heaven Realms are
if that means anything

so yeah I think uh I'm inclined to agree
with uh numbers two and four that uh see
number two is

uh

uh they exist is that

okay

let's see another would be to say they
exist aren't exactly like that but we're
so described to Indians as the skillful
means and I think to some degree that's

true it's like in in Burmese pictures of the Buddhist Heavens the the gods and goddesses are wearing essentially the the outfits of the royal courts of like Royal Burma like back when there were kings and queens of Burma you know they'd be dressed like Prime Ministers and so forth you know they'd be wearing these curly q epaulettes on there in these weird it's like the the male the gods would be wearing like these Pagoda shaped hats and the goddesses would be wearing something that was kind of like a Flash Gordon helmet and you know they just got these long flowing gowns and so forth that yeah I mean that's just a cultural interpretation superimposed

upon I have been around

and then uh his his number four here is

uh

that the heavens exists but don't have a

definite form they're rather constructed

by the collective Karma of the aspirants

and resemble that to which they aspire

to yeah so even if

um you do have this culturally

conditioned expectation I think Heaven

is still going to be different from that

partly because the culturally

conditioned expectation is like sort of

a crude Normy human expectation and when

you're no longer a crude Normy human

you're

your your point of view is going to be more expansive it's going to be very different

so yeah two and four so I'll just move on to the next question here which is the last question of them all the last one and this is from Zen Blues

in the Zen Blues says weird that I had a dream that I died and was just floating around the Earth plane thinking and meeting other ghosts I have had a series of nightmares about a violent incident occurring in the house I live in and the dream came true last week though the violence never came to pass luckily any ideas of what is going on seems like we have premonitions during the Deep dream

states

um yeah it's possible you can have premonitions during deep dream states um it may be that most of them are the dreams that you don't even remember when you get up the next morning but it's it's there it's like you have access to deeper levels of consciousness when you're asleep you may have certain access to psychic powers when you're asleep but you know it's it's like this really like a latent level and so you might have um like precognitive dreams when you're when you're sound asleep and for the most part you won't remember

them and unless maybe they appear later
as like a Deja Vu or something
um it could be I mean he says that he
kept having this these nightmares about
a violent incident occurring in the
house and then the Dream came true
although the violence never came to pass
it could be that he was sort of
the Zen Blues here was sort of
processing I mean it was first of all it
would be like the pre precognition of
this big bad thing that was you know
that was liable to happen and then in a
way he was sort of like processing it
working through it in the dream state
until finally he was able to resolve it
sufficiently that it didn't do its worst

you know it sort of uh mollified it
what's the term where you make it less
bad

so I think that's that's possible I
think that kind of thing can really
happen

um

I was gonna say something else and I
can't remember what it was
seen a series of nightmares about a
violent incident occurring in the house
I live in and the dream came true last
week though the violence never came to
pass

um

yeah I was going to say something else

but yeah I do think well yeah I remember
now ramdas somebody asked womdas once
you know should we take dreams seriously
you know it's like in like in ancient
times for example people believed that
Gods would implant dreams you know
there's like the god of Dreams Morpheus
I think is who it was and he implant
dreams into your mind you know because
they were like Divine messages but I
think biologically the main purpose of
Dreams is just to like organize
information that you've acquired a lot
of them just seem like spandering spam
dreams that don't necessarily mean
anything I mean a lot of them are just
like absurd

and I think most of my dreams are along those lines whereas you're sort of acting out like hopes and fears stuff that's on your mind you know you're thinking about it at night and spinning it into these narratives but uh I do think that uh like precognitive dreams even though I can't remember having woken up with a precognitive dream remembering one and then knowing what was going to happen in the future because of it we're expecting it to happen that uh that's never happened to me that I that I'm aware of but I do think that it can and does happen and it may be

that having the series of nightmares
about the violent incident
um and then the incident happens except
it's not as bad as in the nightmares I
do think it could have been some sort of
processing where you're working through
the events in some karmic way that then
um I still can't remember the word of
I'm trying to come up with to mollified
to make it to attenuate the seriousness
of it you know it's giving you an
attempt to deal with it before it
happens so that when it does happen you
know like your karma is modified and
it's just not necessary for the worst to
happen anymore I do think that that is
possible

and so that was the last question and so
uh

if you have any questions and you think
I might be able to answer them

you know especially if they're about
Buddhism or meditation or monks or just
me personally philosoph Western
philosophy Eastern philosophy that sort
of thing religion in general I tend to
be fairly well versed in

if you think I can answer the question
feel free to ask in the comments below

if you have access to the Discord server
you can ask them there if you have
access to the Subscribe Star channel you
can ask them there if you do have

questions I I advise you to ask them
under a q a video and rather than under
some other video because I might forget
to look under some other video I always
look under the Q a videos because that's
the main place that in the the Discord
server or the main two places for uh
finding the questions

so if you do have questions ask them you
know in under a q a or in the Q a room
of the Discord server or you can message
me on the Subscribe store that sort of
thing and

um like And subscribe if you haven't
already look at the url url links below
the video

and uh be happy

hello and welcome to episode 57 of
question and answer I am your host Ponyo
bossa and this is my toothpick and I'm
going to be clinging to this toothpick
throughout this episode I think because
I was given pork ribs for dinner and
when you eat pork I mean ajan cha talks
about this even when you eat pork it's
like little pieces of pork get stuck
between your teeth and it's you can just
feel it and it takes forever to get them
out sometimes so this is here and this
is my beverage which also can help
both line glandular secretions don't you
know
ah

and I have the veritable [_] ton of questions today people have been very curious and inquisitive over the past week

and so we've got the uh
a boatload you might say

I mean you got we got more questions today than you can shake a stick at in fact the number of sticks required to shake it all these questions would be more than you could shake a stick at so I suppose

instead of lame attempts of humor I should just

start answering questions

God I really it gets they just get in there you know so anyway the very first

question is one that I forgot to ask
last time sometimes it's like my
scrolling fingers are just too muscular
or something and I just shoot past the
question as I'm scrolling down
and so uh

this one was asked by CEO of action
um last time and I just
overlooked it I just skipped over it
accidentally wasn't intentional I
guarantee you

and CEO of action
says can you explain the difference
between the nibana element with
remainder and without remainder because
it says nibana element with remainder

means that the aroha experiences
everything that is pleasurable and
painful but does not have greed hatred
and delusion does that mean to
experience the full nibana element they
have to be in some kind of meditative
state is there a name for when an
aurahan that has experienced this full
nibana is beyond everything

like a name for this state
is there a name for one in aurohan that
is experiencing this full name this
Beyond everything like a name for this
state

I'll try to refrain from being a grammar
Nazi on on this one also why is the
normal walking around experience of an R

haunt also called nibbana well this is
kind of a complicated question actually
on the difference between the nibana
element with remainder and without
remainder is essentially you've got
someone who becomes enlightened then
they're enlightened but they still have
like the residue of Karma and they still
have mental States going on and then the
uh the Nirvana element without remainder
is after the enlightened being die so
it'd be like Pari nibana and this this
part of the question anyway reminds me
of the last few verses
which just threw mere chance
I happen to have right here

and so

there's the very famous koan like

description of an enlightened mental

state which the commentarial tradition

says is not a description of an

enlightened mental state but the context

of the sutra makes it clear that it is

where

the Buddha says with regard to the

enlightened being

he has no perception of perception he

has no perception of non-perception he

is not without perception he has no

perception of void

for one who was attained thus form

becomes void for founded in perception

is diversifying designation or a punches

on cough

so then the person he's talking to says
that which we asked you have related to
us let us ask you something more please
tell us this do indeed some intelligent
ones here declare that the highest
purity of the spirit is to that extent
or do they declare that it is even more
than that

so he's asking you know if there's a
higher state even than this state of
Enlightenment that the Buddha just
explained in this strange you know
riddle-like way

um and which the commentaries say he's
not even trying to explain Enlightenment

even though obviously the context implies that he is so then the Buddha says indeed some intelligent ones here do declare that the highest purity of the spirit is to that extent but then some of them claiming to be Adept declare an attainment in which nothing that was taken up remains so it's like you know all the past karma is just completely exhausted you know there's no more stuff coming up which presumably would mean that the person is dead and then he says so having understood these to be dependent the sage an investigator having understood the ways of dependence a released one having understood does not come to contention

the Wise One does not attain to this or
that existence

so one problem with me answering this
question is I have to answer it twice
once in accordance with Orthodox
tradition and then once in accordance
with my best understanding based upon my
own experience and my own attempts at
making sense of what the texts say
because I have to admit abhidham and the
commentarial Traditions really do not do
a very good job of that in my opinion
so let's see here he says uh can you
explain the difference between the
Bonnet element with remainder and
without remainder one without remainder

means you're dead the enlightened being
is dead with remainder means the
enlightened being is still alive as a
general rule because it says Nirvana
element with remainder means that the
arhan experiences everything that is
pleasurable and painful but does not
have greed hatred and delusion does that
mean to experience the full nibana
element they have to be in some kind of
meditative state

well according to Orthodox tradition
even an enlightened being isn't in a
state of nibbana all the time he goes
into a meditative State and then he
experiences nibana for like a trillionth
of a second

but he can do that whenever he feels
like it

but still I mean that

I mean it really is not

compatible with what texts like the

kalahui wadasuta say because that koan

like definition of the enlightened mind

is presumably

only continuous

you're always in a state of niblana and

that would be my interpretation also

that an enlightened being isn't just

experiencing nibana in like momentary

flashes when he decides that he wants to

experience nibana or when it when he

just is appropriate for him to

experience it but rather I mean he's
just always in that state because he has
transmuted perception into its
underlying essence of reality
so let's see is there a name for one in
our hunt that is experiencing this full
nibana that's beyond everything like a
name for this state
also why is the normal walking around
experience if it are not also called
nibana well in older texts maybe and
according my understanding like I just
said the aura Hunt is pro I mean his
mind will be
in a state of Nevada because he is
directly experiencing Ultimate Reality
he's still going through the motions but

it's it's it's so hard to explain this I
mean maybe I should have answered this
question last time so it wouldn't be the
very first one on the list this time
because again you're having to deal with
this paradoxical State like Buddha say
that Nirvana and samsara are ultimately
the same it's sort of like
Nirvana is the essence of reality and
like samsara is just the forms that this
Essence assumes or seems to assume
so whether I've answered this second
half of this question or not
I'm not exactly sure
um because again to further complicate
matters the Orthodox tradition says one

thing and I say something else
and you can just take your pick so
let's see is there a name for when an
aura that is experiencing this
vulnerable that's beyond everything like
a name for this state
um yeah
the the grammar kind of throws me off
because I can be a grammar Nazi at times
but um yeah with according to Orthodox
tradition I mean the state that I think
he's referring to I mean it'd just be
like and then like this state of being
an enlightened being
uh gosh you know just being in Aura hunt
that would be it I suppose
so I think I'll just move on to CEO box

ncpot zidane's next question because as
I say I've got the proverbial [_] ton
of questions here

so he says does the Buddha ever teach
nibana as the Ultimate Reality well the
Buddha

he tried to avoid teaching nibana as
anything I mean that's one thing that
the the Buddhists the early Buddhists
especially and to some degree the majama
kab Buddhists afterwards were really
good at just not reifying nibana abidama
turned it into a just one of many
ultimate realities which is is
ridiculous in my opinion
but um

I mean there's implications that it is like Indiana you know there's just one truth and not another that sort of a thing so I mean the one truth would presumably be the Ultimate Reality um

but nibana I mean talking about nibana is difficult I mean just because human languages aren't designed to talk about what is off the scale what is you know is they're not designed to talk about the content and thing in itself you know they're the languages were designed to talk about you know what you want for dinner and you know where where the the hospital is and you know this worldly practical material stuff

and uh or feelings you know my knee

itches or something

and uh so I mean it is good to bear in
mind that

there are two aspects of Nirvana even

though Nirvana's Ultimate Reality but I

mean there's two approaches to it one is

metaphysical like when abidamma says you

know nibana is an Ultimate Reality

and two is is ethical you know the

attaining of Enlightenment would be also

nibana in fact nibana is almost a verb

it's like a verbal noun it means blowing
out

knee is out and The Barn hours like

Nirvana is blowing out

so it's like a fire blowing out which um
I mean it's it's so hard to talk about
it really is because if nibana were just
the principle of cessation which is like
an orthodox definition of nibana then I
mean cessation lasts one moment at most
and I mean it can't be like constantly
ceasing it just ceases and that's it
some sorrow I mean or greed hate and
delusion or or suffering or or whatever
whatever it is that you're uh that you
are bringing an end to when you become
enlightened
so there is implications of nibana as
Ultimate Reality but he doesn't just
flat out say it because the Buddha
doesn't really flat out say much of

anything about nabana especially in the earlier texts later texts they'll start talking about it more and then you get into Mahayana Buddhism and they're talking about it more but um I think in the beginning the Buddha was very scrupulous about not reifying nibana that I mean if we talk about nibana at all it would be you know the state of blowing out you know the state of becoming enlightened which itself would not be well defined because you can't Define it very well anyway so yeah it is implied but I mean really nibana is not

it is not equated with with anything
else really

so I think I'll just move on to CEO
batch and see about this internet's
questions and his next question and he's
been asking some subtle and difficult
questions lately

and uh I mean mainly it's difficult to
just put an answer into words
because as I say Nirvana is just off the
scale

it is not in samsara it is not part of
samsara

so the next question is
you say there was a there was probably
no perfect sages but what about the
Buddha he seems like the perfect Sage to

me with wisdom greater than all that have ever lived sure he probably wasn't omniscient but nothing makes me doubt his Enlightenment meanwhile the same can't be said about most of these Hindu gurus who are practically advocating nothing different than the devotionalism of other religions and don't even have control of their emotions or what's in their pants well I mean the Buddha says even and nobody has complete control over their emotions or or of their body um I mean that's one of the signs of no self you know like the anata supposedly the Buddha's second discourse after his Enlightenment because his first

disciples to become fully enlightened
he's saying you just do not have
complete control you cannot say with
regard to any of the five condas let it
be this way and let it not be that way
and have it consistently happen because
you're really not in control of that
so it's more a matter of mindfulness of
what arises rather than controlling what
arises

so let's see you see there are probably
no perfect stages but what about the
Buddha well we don't know what the
Buddha was really like

I mean I'm reminded of one of the early
Christian Saints I think it was Saint
Benedict where he wrote an autobiography

and he confessed that he enjoyed talking
to young women more than he enjoyed
talking to old women
and his followers you know the the
benedictines consider that to be too
scandalously honest you know he was he
was too admitting like what could be
considered a fault about himself and so
that was edited out of his of Saint
Benedict's autobiography for centuries
and I think the Buddha was somewhat
similar or he could have been
the man lived 25 centuries ago we don't
know exactly what he was like any more
than we know exactly what Socrates was
like

Socrates is a fairly good example or a
good

comparison

because

we have some fair Fairly solid ideas

about who Socrates was and where he

lived and when he lived and what he was

like to some degree

but then you have people like Plato and

xenophon who are

describing Socrates and Plato and

xenophon there are two main sources of

information about Socrates and they're

describing essentially two different

people

I mean there's overlap but I mean there

were definitely not the same guy that

they were describing and even in ancient times they knew that most of what Plato said was said by Socrates was really just Plato's words coming out of sort of a fictionalized socrates's mouth and so the early Buddhists

um you know they were very keen on honoring and glorifying their teacher and so anything that the Buddha did like maybe he cracked a joke every now and then maybe he laughed even

but nowadays or even you know relatively early on they're saying that a fully enlightened being cannot laugh or cry which I'm skeptical of

so

um

the Buddha was a sage but the thing is
from a samsaric point of view there's
always going to be quirks you can you
can you can criticize you know like you
know he abandoned his wife and child you
know that's this sort of thing or the
the comment he made about the the pretty
young woman

who you know what is this full of urine
and dung I would not want to touch it
even my foot I mean you can you can read
the biographies of saints and sages and
I mean if you have got like a cynical
eye or you're just looking for Scandal
you can find it you can find dirt and
you can just fling it if you want

and I mean the same could be done with
the Buddha even with his
his biography is sanitized and like
glorified still I mean there's stuff you
can find fault with if you really want
to find fault with something and
um I'm sure there's a lot of non-budhas
for example who have taken like
religions of the world and like classes
in in world religions or something and
then
you know they can read this stuff about
the Buddha and then they can just like
pick out the stuff that's like now there
you see he was an enlightened being he
was a huckster or whatever

so I really do think it's it's sort of
like the first question where a CEO of
actions where it's like
you still have these at the samsaric
level you still have all these human
quirks and human foibles and so forth
because you're human
but it's not that you have completely
gone beyond that like in a samsaric
sense you just transcended it you know
you're not identified with that anymore
that's not you I mean you don't consider
it to be you anymore it's just nature
taking its course
that's I mean that's what true wisdom is
it's not like completely controlling
your behavior so that you behave in a

perfectly saintly manner all the time
is that you are mindful of what is
arising and you're not identifying with
it at all you're not clinging to it it's
just nature taking its course and
because of a lot of spiritual practice
to get you to that state you've got good
habits set in you know you just there
are certain things that are pretty easy
to do because you've been resisting the
urge to do it for years and years and
you've been mindful of the urges and
they've been weakened through not
feeding them you know not reinforcing
them
so an enlightened being will be more

saintly in his behavior than the average guy but still I mean if you want to find fault you can find fault it's still I mean their behavior is still samsaric because the behavior is a some sorry phenomenon

so let's see here meanwhile the same can't be said about most of those Hindu gurus who are practically advocating nothing different than devotionism neem curly Baba his pictures up there he worshiped Hanuman the monkey god but I mean Miracles just happen around him like

it was almost a common place and he would look at you and he would see right through you and like Ram Das used to say

the better you knew him the more you
realize there was nobody there it was
just like a mirror reflecting your own
Karma back at you and if you had
rascally Karma you'd have a rascally
Karma reflected back at you
so I mean it's it's not so much thinking
the right stuff and saying the right
stuff you don't have to be a
sophisticated philosopher to be
enlightened you just have to be detached
Mindful and detached
and then whatever comes up as a result
of cultural conditioning or past Karma
or whatever it's just nature taking its
course and you're not involved in that

you know it's just that's not you
anymore you don't identify with it it's
just

I mean you're just detached

so I think I'll just move on to silvax

and sipad zidane's next question here

in the story of the kid how did his

mother renounce if the terravada none

order died out and the beating he got

sounds brutal I bet he wished he was

never found by that monk maybe that's

when he truly comprehended dukkha and

realized cessation is better than

samsara well this is from I think it was

the previous q a where I was talking

about this little kid whose mother was a

nun I mean she became a nun after she

had the kid and she didn't want to have
to raise a kid as a nun so she just and
she just figured I mean she was very
religious apparently she just wanted him
to become a monk so she sent him to a
monastery this little kid who just
wanted to be a little kid I think his
name was po nandana

uh that was his his uh posted though his
like uh

it's like a pretty novice they wore
white they were white robes and shaved
their head but they could still handle
money and so forth

and uh

yeah he ran away because he just wanted

to be a kid you know and uh finally
um the senior monk who was you know
responsible for him found him I mean he
was out searching for him day after day
for like two weeks until he finally
found him dressed in rags living in this
tea shop

and uh he he brought him back to the
monastery and then they sent him to the
nunnery where his mother was and the
Mother Superior just gave him a really
really hard beating

and uh I guess the question here is that
um

how did his mother renounce that the
terravada nun order died out was because
she wasn't a fully ordained bikuni she

was what is called in Burma Shin which
is an a preceptor or ten precept none
there are lots of those I can't remember
what I think they're called Machi in
Thailand where they mostly wear white I
think

so even though the fully ordained nuns
went extinct centuries ago
although there there have been attempts
to revive them mainly for the for like
politically correct gender equality and
so forth

but still there are nuns they're just
not fully ordained
and they generally keep you know uh
only like eight or ten precepts plus um

what you might call extra precepts of
just you know the uniform and the shaved
head and all that

so let's see

so that's the main question here that's
the only question mark how did how did

his mother renounce of the terravada

non-order died out well there's still

unordained nons or semi-ordained

dealerships

so see the buildings got sounds brutal I

bet he wished he was never found by well

he was getting beaten I assumed he

wished he was never found by the monk

but I assume he gradually

you know he reconciled himself to it and

was realized that he was better off not

living like a hobo under a bridge or you
know in a tea shop where he's still
dressed in rags and so forth eventually
things got better for him I assume so
we'll just move on to seal of action
sipad ziderno's next question
which is

I would personally never ordain because
I want to be there for my parents how
did you come to terms when your own
parents passed away and you weren't
there in their time of need I would have
lived with regret my whole life and then
this this comment was under the the in
the comments of the previous q a and
then someone replied to his comment by

saying a very timely and pertinent
question when Western and East Asian
societies are experiencing declining
birth rates aging populations and the
inversion of demographic pyramids
foreign

I guess the main question here is let's
see

how did you become how did I become that
is

how did I come to terms when my own
parents passed away and I weren't there
in their time of need well I mean and
then he says he would have lived with
regret his entire his whole life well
one thing that I've learned

I mean I really I really have taken this

to heart and it's one of the most
important things a Buddhist should
realize is that regret is always Bad
Karma in poly it's called kukucha it is
unskillful it's
always makes things worse
so if you do something wrong to
acknowledge you did something wrong and
do what you can if possible to rectify
you wrong that's fine you know to
acknowledge you did something wrong and
to like
determine that you will try to do better
in the future that's completely fine but
to feel regret and remorse just makes
things worse it's just bad karma you

shouldn't do it so I've taken that to heart and I mean it sometimes it makes me seem kind of inhuman I suppose people have gotten upset with me more than once because of that but still I mean it's just just the way it is Regret remorse is Bad Karma from a Buddhist point of view

don't do it

and it's just I've become almost immune to regret I think it would have been nice if I could have been a better son to my mother especially my father had a good pension he had a wife who adored him he was taken care of you know I didn't have to worry so much about him my mother on the other hand made lots of

mistakes in her life and

yeah I mean she did not

she did not have a happy Serene old age

other than just when she's on the couch

watching TV or something

and uh yeah it would have been nice if

if I could have been a better son to her

and I was in Burma when both of my

parents died

so I mean

yeah

let's see

okay so that's I answered that question

so I'm just going to move on to this

question this is from the Spanish

Inquisition

and this also he asked more than a week ago I think but he asked it in an older q a and then when I'm going through the previous q a like you know compiling questions for the list I didn't see it because it was in the Q a before that I mean he asked the question like after I'd already done the Q a after that so I didn't see it so anyway the Spanish Inquisition says

in meditation are you supposed to actually say in your mind that's long breath or short breath or breathing in breathing out or just observing those without thinking these words

well I have to admit like in the Sadi patano suta and in the anapana suta it

says you know when you breathe in you
know I am breathing in and when you are
when you're breathing out you know I'm
breathing out when you're breathing in a
long breath you know I'm breathing in a
long breath when you're breathing in a
short breath you know I'm breathing in a
short breath

Etc

and that is just a heck of a lot of
thinking and you're never going to get
any kind of deep meditative States
you're never going to get into deep
meditation if you're if you're just
thinking like in sentences like this you
know I'm breathing in long I'm breathing

in short

so I think it was a lack of

sophistication in communication skills

to some degree when they're composing

this

I'm not exactly sure why they did it but

it's not the best advice I mean really

they should say when you breathe in long

you know you're breathing in long and

you breathe in short you know you're

breathing in short when you're you know

you're breathing in fast you know you're

breathing in fast breathing slow you

know you're breathing in slow I mean you

just essentially what it's saying is you

know you know the qualities of the

breath

so

yeah you're better off not thinking in terms of I'm breathing in long you know that this is a short breath this is a long breath anything like that

um for relative beginners up until like intermediate levels I mean you can say breathing in breathing out I mean if if your mind is still active enough that you need some kind of busy work to keep it occupied so it's not just drifting or floating all over the place just drifting away from meditation you know it's like if you've got an active mind you need an active meditation to keep the active mind occupied

and then as the Mind settles down then
you get a more subtle quieter calmer
kind of meditation

because I mean if you just stick to
breathing in breathing out breathing and
breathing out you're never going to get
past words unless maybe you just start
being mindful of

of the thought the the words themselves
you know as perceptions or thoughts or
whatever without really paying attention
to the content

um

so

um yeah you generally start off labeling
but even breathing in Long breathing in
short I mean that's excessive labeling

in my opinion even beginners really I
mean generally they're not instructed to
do that just breathing in breathing out
and then I mean you just you use that
almost as a mantra just a way of
occupying your mind and keeping it from
drifting away from the primary object
which is

the breath of the nostrils as a general
rule

so I mean I'm I'm getting all
complicated on this relatively simple
question here

so I'll just read it again in meditation
are you supposed to actually say in your
mind that's long breath short breath

breathing and breathing out or just
observing those without thinking these
words okay

um breathing and breathing out would be
like the beginning level anything more
than that would be excessive unless you
really have a hyperactive mind and you
need to just label everything especially
at first until your mind settles down
but once your mind settles down enough
then you dispense with all labels and
you just watch the phenomenon now you're
just aware of it

so we'll just move on to the Spanish
Inquisition the next question

um oh

okay he's asked me to show a postcard

behind me on the bookshelf just a minute
let's see here right there
okay
and uh the Spanish inquisition's next
question is and please can you for the
next q a put my postcard somewhere
behind you on the bookshelf or wherever
as it turns out it's right there
next question
it's a very nice postcard too by the way
next question there are some rules that
came of basically monks having too much
or maybe too expensive stuff
deliberately cutting and sewing robes is
a good example
what is your take on monks having

laptops and iPhones while maybe in an
exit Village in rural Burma or Thailand
some honest Working Man may look at
those monks and think those beakus are
more wealthy than we are I suspect that
if the the Buddha lived today he would
allow socks or warm clothes from monks
but he would and I'm almost sure of this
not allow

one thousand dollar iPhones or laptops
and smoking cigarettes

so let's see what is your take on lungs
having laptops and iPhones well it's
it's even more than that like in Burma
a lot of monks literally the word biku
means beggar become

he begs for alms he is therefore he is a

biku

and still I mean these Beggars you know
these humble Beggars going Barefoot
silently through the village with their
homes Bowl they'll have servants with
them

and even back at the monster they got
servants they got attendance attending
to their needs and so forth which is
more than the average subsistence farmer
can afford and always made me feel
uncomfortable you know I didn't like
having servants you know I'd send them
all because like they're a few times
when a servants want to come along and
you know carry the heavy stuff or or

something I just say no man it's just embarrassing for a beggar to have a servant

but let's see with regard to and then I mean so it's it's sort of this weird tug of war on the one hand the suit is themselves say a monk should have eight requisites you know just just as little stuff as you can you know you can just carry it around with him

well everything he owns he can just pick it up you know put it on his back and just start walking

but like in a place like Burma or just about any devoutly Buddhist country

people consider monks to be exalted

beings you know they're holy men and you

get Merit from offering them stuff and
it makes them feel bad if
they see a monk who's doesn't have a
servant or he's just got crappy stuff
you know just cheap you know bottom of
the line stuff you know it makes them
feel like they're not supporting him
enough they're not you know it's like
they're getting demerit from letting
this monk you know make do with you know
the second rate stuff and so
um it's like the strictest monks are the
ones that people want to spoil rotten
the most because they get the most Merit
for helping like the really saintly
monks I mean is if you're helping a

rascal lack sloppy monk you still get
Merit but if you're helping a saint you
get way more Merit for that and so
they're trying to like feed them the
best food and give them the best stuff
and and they just consider that to be
proper

although the non-budists or the like the
the lukewarm skeptical cynical types
will say yeah look at these monks you
know they live like kings
and they don't have to do anything you
know

so I mean it goes both ways
um with regard to monks having laptops
and iPhones my last
let's see maybe my last 10 years as a

monk I did have a laptop it was the first laptop I ever owned I got after I've been a monk for 20 years or so um and it's very useful I mean instead of carrying around an entire bookcase like the entire polytopitica you can just have it all on on on the computer you know and there's no way you can carry an entire polytopitic around with you in Burma in the Burmese Edition it's 40 volumes like the first those the blue uh like after the very first book on the top shelf there which is the poly English dictionary there are several books after that that are part of the polytopitica

the Burmese polytopitica and it's just
40 of those size of books and you just
couldn't carry him around with you but
on a computer you can uh it does have a
certain advantages

but still I mean it's it's this weird
situation where uh probably
um yeah um like if the Buddha were alive
and he was still like an ancient Indian
yeah he'd say just none of that's
necessary just sit under a tree with a
few possessions

but nowadays I mean it's uh
communication and everything
it's it's kind of a problematic
situation and the the the iPhones yeah I
had a crappy uh Huawei when I was in

Burma

let's see

that was just my last few years as a
month also I just used it mainly as an
alarm clock and uh

a Wi-Fi hotspot

so let's see

yeah the monk if the Buddha Loop today
you see he he would allow socks or warm
clothes for monks but he would and I'm
almost sure of this not allow a thousand
dollar iPhones or laptops and smoking
cigarettes yeah smoking cigarettes
that's that's a big deal in Thailand
especially because probably the most
famous

Aura hunt or monk considered to have been an araha in Thailand is ajan man he was like the founder of the Thai Forest tradition or considered to be the founder by many people it was considered to be an aura hunt and he smoked cigarettes he was a chain smoker in fact so he literally he was a drug addict and also he ate cheese in the afternoon so forth so time monks I mean if on John mun did it and he was in Aura hunt and smoking cigarettes and eating cheese in the afternoon is is a-okay but I mean literally tobacco is an addictive drug and since a monk is trying to ABS trying to free himself from all attachments then

obviously you don't take addictive drugs
if you can help it
so yeah I think for the most part I'm
not sure about allowing socks or warm
clothes unless it's in an area where it
really gets below freezing because it
got down to freezing in the Ganges
Valley and that was when the Buddha said
three robes are enough no socks anything
like that
people are just tougher back then I
guess monks especially
so we'll just move on to
um the Spanish inquisitions next in the
last question here
if one joined the monk song of because

his parents force him to would the
ordination be valid is it valid for
children I have forgotten what is the
minimal age for boy or man to ordain
well that's two questions so the first
one is if you're

if one joins the the Sangha because your
parents just force you into it yeah it's
the ordination is still valid

um the ordination at the ordination I
mean it does say that it's against the
rules to ordain a monk if his parents
don't give their consent although the
ordination is still valid

um it's just that the monks who do the
ceremony

um they have they commit a minor offense

requiring confession

but so long as he sits through the ceremony and he he's uh got all the qualifications that are requisite then uh yeah it's it's a valid ordination and with regard to uh the minimum age to be ordained as a monk it would be 20 years from conception

so that'd be like 19 years and three months

I think uh

in Nepali tradition they go with 10 lunar months as the the period of pregnancy in a woman

um with regard to novices you can be ordained as a novice

um

I think there's this obscure statement in the text that says if a boy is old enough to scare crows then he's old enough to be a novice and to scarecrows that's that'd be like a job for a kid to be guarding the fields and you know right before Harvest Time to keep them from being raped by birds you know he'll be standing there you know alert enough and Vigilant enough then he can keep the the flocks of crows or sparrows or whatever from raping the fields before Harvest Time um although I've seen very small kids get ordained as as novices

um

it's kind of interesting that the reason
why

the Buddha made the rule saying that you
have to be at least 20 years old to be
ordained according to the law according
to tradition is that before that you're
not emotionally mature enough to
withstand the taunts and abuse of
non-buddhists who are like making fun of
you and calling you a skinhead and so
forth

because that did happen in the Buddhist
time obviously in the Buddhist time

India was not predominantly Buddhist in
fact there were lots of spiritual
teachers who were more popular and

famous in the Buddha was during his
lifetime

so we'll just move on to the next
question this is from Aaron

and erain says how does one overcome the
language barrier when learning Buddhism
in the west so many terms are in poly or
Sanskrit that it turns some people away
um

well I mean that's we're kind of stuck
with that I mean in Christianity
everything's been translated in English
in English-speaking countries there they
don't really go with like um much Greek
or Hebrew you know there's a few words
like Agape that kind of a thing like
Christ itself is well it's an English

English version of Christos or Christos

ah so

yeah but in in teravana Buddhism there's

a lot of poly terms

so

how does one overcome language barrier

when learning Buddhism well one thing

you can get a just a Buddhist dictionary

loka's Buddhist dictionary it's for free

distribution from some places some

charitable organizations just distribute

it for free

um but I think we're pretty much stuck

with a lot of poly terms which in the

long run is a good thing I mean once you

learn the meaning of it it's much better

than having relying on English
translations that may not be the best
translation like the term Asawa you know
if you're familiar with the term Asawa
you can get a pretty good idea of what
it's referring to but in English
you've got like bikubody refers to it as
taints in some old translations it's
cankers is there's there's all these
different translations I I rendered as
encumbering influence
or sometimes like anjan tanisro he's got
his own set of renderings you know he
just does not follow established
tradition with regard to even stuff like
mindfulness
so he'll have his own unique terms and

if you're not familiar with Paulie you
don't know what the poly equivalent is
what he's talking about sometimes
so it is good I mean if you're serious
about studying

terravonna Buddhism it is good to
familiarize yourself with at least you
know the top 20 or 50 poly terms like
the philosophical terms

and I mean if you're really serious you
would do well to just learn poly so you
can read the text in the original poly
so how does one overcome the language
barrier when learning Buddhism in the
West

um you rely on English translations

um like bikubody's translations he
doesn't leave very many words
untranslated and then a lot of technical
terms he'll have endnotes or footnotes
or something just explaining them that
sort of thing
so yeah it's it's terrible Buddhism this
is one of the reasons why terravonna
appeals more to educated intellectual
types than Mill workers for example
hairdressers
because

I mean it does take a certain amount of
intelligence and study to really get the
jargon down get the terminology down so
that you can understand you know what
what it is that you're studying what it

is that you're reading and so forth
so I'm sorry I mean there's the best way
to overcome a language barrier is just
read books like introductory books into
Terra Vada which will gradually teach
you you know what comma is and what
dhamma is and you know what osawa is and
what condos are and and duka this kind
of a thing and gradually just through
osmosis you'll pick it up
but it can be kind of daunting at first
but it's well worth it I mean if you're
interested in terravala then it is worth
your while to familiarize yourself with
you know a few dozen poly terms at least
so I'll just move on to the next

question here this is from the Arya

sawasdi project

and this is kind of a subtle one

and the Arias velocity project says

regarding the nauseating we are all one

that we constantly hear from the left

and the idea that we as Buddhists are

trying to expand our Consciousness into

the not nauseating all is one both ideas

sound the same but are wildly different

can you share your thoughts on how we

can all be one and not be one at the

same time please excuse my

misunderstanding of both these topics

well personally I really haven't been

encountering leftist saying we are all

one very often because they're the ones

who are dividing everybody up in
different groups you know they're
emphasizing differences now identity
politics has really thrown a monkey
wrench into the We Are All One narrative
that might have been a big deal like 20
30 40 years ago
but now it's you know Hawaii is evil
conservatives are Nazis they're not
they're not one with us they should just
be you know put in concentration camps
or you know gotten rid of somehow or
other indoctrinated indoctrinate their
children so at least their children will
grow up to be good leftists so
yeah the whole the whole idea of we are

all one has pretty much collapsed in the left because they are emphasizing identity politics and just division dividing everybody up into in the groups and there you got suppressor groups and oppressed groups the oppressor groups being mostly white men and oppressed groups being pretty much everybody else but let's let's just assume for the sake of argument there's still a significant number of leftists like let's say they're not very political who are saying we are all one um yeah they're probably still operating in a samsaric level I mean there's going to be Wise Wise leftists who are just very naive with regard to politics

perhaps

who you know they're you know they're
wise they've got wisdom and so they
could say we are all one I mean they
might mean it you know at a metaphysical
level sort of like the second
interpretation of We Are One or we are
all one is I mean ultimately at the
level of Ultimate Reality there is no
division into into this and that or much
less categories or groups
you know it's just everything is
undivided
you know you've got just infinite
formless
Consciousness or whatever you want to

call it God

whatever

you want to say it's all God like name

Carly Baba you know one of his his

monosu are hype

it's all God

and that's that's how everything is won

it's all United in Ultimate Reality

but if you've got some

person who's not particularly wise

saying we are all one they might be

emphasizing you know like compassion the

heart chakra or something

which is not bad

but it's not off the scale yet and so

there's a certain amount of delusion

still involved and if there's if they're

saying that while like still committed
to Identity politics then they're just
confused or hypocritical

so

how we can all be one and not be one at
the same time well we're all one at the
level of Ultimate Reality but here at
the psalmsoric level we're obviously not
all one

so I'll just move on to the next

question here this is from librelam

I don't know how to pronounce some of
these names Libra Lam maybe use Japanese
or something no no that'd be Reba ROM

okay anyway

he says a mentor mentor and close friend

of mine is a shaman a unique point he
has made one I found especially darmic
is the relationship between the words
Shaman and shramana

in the context of the natural wisdom of
the Buddha him attaining Mastery largely
on his own as a Pioneer seems very
similar to the way of practice of my
Shaman friend he speaks of nature as the
ultimate teacher of Dharma and causality
of a spiritual variety would you
consider a translation like this valid
and then he's got Sanskrit here yay

Dharma

the targeto

Ramana

and then he's got the translation of

that as of those phenomena which arise
from causes those causes have been
taught by the detergent and their
cessation two thus proclaims the great
Shaman and if I remember correctly this
is a Sanskrit version of the words that
converted

who was it Muhammad galana or sorry puta
one of one of the Two Chief Disciples of
the Buddha converted him to Buddhism
that originally both of them were
Disciples of a different teacher
and they saw one of the the monks first
decide one of the Buddha's first
disciples going for olives and he looked
so Serene you know his face is just

shining

and uh so he asked him you know who's
your teacher what does he teach and then
the the Buddhist monk says this and then
that was enough to convert this follower
and then he went and got his friend and
both of them came over and then uh the
other teacher vomited hot blood and died
according to tradition because he lost
two of his best disciples to the Buddha
um but getting getting back to this uh
referring to ashramana as a shaman it's
I mean it's it's sort of backwards I
mean the word Shaman I'm pretty sure I
have I have been told that it is derived
from Sanskrit shramana which in Pali is
Samana

and uh I usually translate it as

philosopher it's usually translated as

acetic or renunciant

um I think uh ajanta nisaro who as I say

has his own set of renderings for words

I think he refers to them as

contemplatives

um I mean contemplative might be a more

literal translation of Samana

but as Buddhism spread up into like

Central Asia and like Mongolia then

you've got like siberian tribes and so

forth you know seeing these these holy

men that were referred to as tramana or

something similar to shramana and you

know their their own holy men you know

their their Witch Doctors they're
they're healers and so forth adopted
that term and it became shaman
so

it's not really saying that the Buddha
was a shaman I mean it wasn't really an
Indian concept at that time
um at least you don't find it in the
text

so I mean it meant something different
and then it got appropriated
um by later later spiritual
um traditions

so let's see would I consider a
translation like this valid yeah all the
translation is good although thus
proclaims the great Shaman is probably

not the best translation because I mean
he was

I mean really it's referring to him as a
great philosopher a great renuncian
ascetic philosopher

and uh I mean if you want to see shamans
are renouncing ascetic philosophers then
yeah I mean that might be a fair
translation but usually Shaman is
associated with like tribal
sort of animistic spirituality kind of
stuff

so

let's see going over this uh
speaks of nature as the ultimate teacher
of Dharma

to some degree I suppose I can agree
with that causality of a spiritual
variety yeah

yeah but I mean what it all boils down
to apparently is uh could you call
ashramana an ancient Indian shramana a
shaman and although they have the same
etymology because Shaman is derived from
shramana or so I've been told
nevertheless I think the the meaning of
Shaman has diverged considerably from
the original meaning of shramana or the
meaning that prevailed in in the
Buddhist times

so I'll just move on to the next
question here also from lieberlab

what event brought you the most joy as a

monk what personal interaction brought
you the most Joy what interaction that
you were an outside viewer of brought
you the most Joy well that's three
questions isn't it I suppose I should
separate these

you know I'm going to separate them

okay that one's

that one's separated

and now this one's going to be separated

okay

now I'm gonna

do that all right so what event brought

you the most joy as a monk

ah well

it's it's a long story and I've got so

many I should maybe I should just I
wrote an essay about this a long time
ago called something like the great
experiment in mediocrity and I'll just
give a very condensed version of it in
that

um

I was

I'd been a monk for more than 10 years
and then I got sick I got some kind of
flu or something and I just hit rock
bottom it's like any kind of enjoyment
in life was gone I couldn't take a bath
anymore because I had a fever the
doctors were saying just I should just
sponge myself off instead of taking a
real bath

um I couldn't eat I couldn't sleep just
I couldn't meditate I mean I just it was
just I just hit this kind of depression
of like thinking I've been a monk all
this time and I can still hit rock
bottom like this and have no consolation
you know I mean what's the point and I
even after months of this this feeling
of just frustration and what's the point
if I can still be depressed like this
um I wrote a letter to my teacher in
Burma I wrote a letter to my father back
in America saying you know I just I'm
not gonna I just don't want to try as
hard as I can anymore because I was
really just going full blast as a monk

as full blast as I can manage and I was just you know I just got as far as I could with it at the time and so I just I'm just let go it's like you know I just kind of gave up and then it was like right after that it was like what I needed to do because I was like grasping too tightly onto some aspect of my practice or some such just fighting using Khmer Rouge tactics against my own defilements just struggling against my own nature that what I had to do was just sort of relax which is what happened when I sort of gave up and all of a sudden I was experiencing the best meditation of my life and just going into these spontaneous

um

it's like spontaneous mindfulness like
I'd be at the well fetching a bucket of
water and you'd just be feeling the the
Rope against the palms of your hands and
you'd be feeling the muscles and the
joints moving you know the tightening of
the muscles as you're pulling and you'd
be feeling the breeze on your skin just
everything is just crystal clear
and it was during this time that I was
walking down to take a bath and get a
bucket of water I lived up on this hill
there was these Stone steps that would
went down to the lower Monastery and I'm
walking down these Stone steps and I

just all of a sudden start getting
really intense abdominal cramps because
apparently I ate some shrimp Curry that
had gone bad or something earlier that
day and just really intense like stomach
pains abdominal cramps I'm just doubled
over anyone who saw my face would think
that I was dying you know just grimacing
in pain

and I'm reflecting on the fact that you
know probability I'm going to be making
at least three emergency trips to the
Outhouse that night and then it started
raining and I had my upper robe on and I
I only had three robes at the time my
upper robe my lower robe and an outer
robe and I'm now I'm thinking I didn't

have an umbrella so I'm thinking well
I'm gonna be wearing wet robes tomorrow
because I'm getting rained on I'm
doubled over in pain getting rained on
and then all of a sudden it was like
something kind of clicked there was just
a subtle shift and all of a sudden it
was like the center of my awareness was
like deep deep down and it was like I
was in deep still cool water and I could
look up and see all this commotion going
on at the surface but it wasn't really
affecting me anymore I was down in this
Stillness
just just peace just it was it was just
Sublime this feeling that I was

experiencing

and

and I was

so overwhelmed with joy even though I

still doubled over in pain like at the

surface level you know the the outward

level I'm still doubled over in pain

getting rained on thinking about how I'm

gonna get the shits all night

still at this deeper level where my was

which was like the center of my

awareness at the time it was just like a

miracle that I could be in that kind of

pain and discomfort and so forth and

just be in a state of just under Bliss

and I was so happy that I was

practically crying with joy

while at the same time anyone who saw my
face with things that I was dying

I had one one new age guy tell me that's
that's an Enlightenment experience

so yeah that that brought me the most
joy as a monk I suppose

I'm meeting my sweetheart when I was a
mom when we got we're just getting to
know each other I was still a monk at
the time we had to touch or anything but
that was it was very joyful also

so I'll move on to uh Libra Lam's next
question here

what personal interaction brought you
the most Joy I guess

uh yeah I guess meeting my sweetheart I

was still a monk at the time but uh yeah
I would say that and then what
interaction that you are an outside
viewer of brought you the most joy and
the first thing that came to mind when I
read this question what interaction that
you were an outside viewer of brought
you the most Joy it was I'd been a monk
for just a few years and I was in Burma
and I was walking to the village for
alms so you have to walk through these
kind of rice fields and stuff there's
this little Trail you'd be going through
fields and so forth and I got to the
outskirts of the village of let's see
what was the name of that Village
which was in central Burma

and there was a dirt road leading out of the village and you you leave the trail through the fields and you get onto the dirt road and you walk the last 100 yards or so

um down this dirt road to get into the village and I just I'm just getting to that dirt road and there's a middle-aged man and apparently his wife are just walking along they don't see me they don't they're just oblivious to anything but themselves each other really they're just walking very slowly just these smiles on their face indicate that they very much enjoy each other's company you know and they're just kind of murmuring

to each other and I mean I just felt really happy I mean I really am happy when I see like old people that still love each other you know they're still you know it's not just a matter of habit or emotional attachment but you know they just still think that each other is like wonderful you know it's just I guess I'm just sentimental like I was I was literally crying last night after when I got to the end of the the first Rocky movie I watched the first Rocky movie last night the ending of it always makes me cry I get choked up and I'm not like boohooing all over the place but I was definitely choked up so yeah I guess seeing that middle-aged

couple just obviously very much loving
each other just walking along slowly
just murmuring with smiles peaceful
Smiles on their faces I don't know for
some reason that really struck me at the
time

so I'll just move on to the next
question here what was your favorite
wild animal that you ever met I guess
it'd have to be chicken Lord
and those of you who are unfamiliar with
chicken Lord he was um
um a red jungle fowl like a wild chicken
who lived in the forest
where I was where I was living
and he was really a majestic beast he

really was

I'm pretty sure beasts don't have to be
quadruped

because

um as like when most chickens most
roosters he had two legs

well he was just really this Noble
majestic animal and we were friends and
we had respect for each other at least I
had respect for him

so I guess it'd be chicken Lord if if
you want the full details on chicken
Lord a few months ago I I've uh did a
video in which I was describing chicken
Lord his one of the two coolest Birds
I've ever met

so I'll just move on to the next

question that was fairly easy which is what was your favorite domesticated animal that you ever met and that is really a tough question my my favorite domesticated animal that I ever met certainly would have to be a dog because some of my best friends throughout life have been dogs some of my best friends have been scrumpy Burmese Village dogs like dunderhead like there was this dog that I called dunderhead he wasn't he wasn't very bright Burmese Village dogs generally are not very intelligent and I used to wonder about that until I finally read somewhere that brain tissue uses as much energy as strenuously

exercising muscle tissue and in a in a
world where malnutrition and starvation
are one of some of the leading causes of
death than having a small brain actually
has survival value

and done her head was was kind of dumb
but see he was

technically he was the dog of a
monastery attendant he was like the
nephew of one of the of the old monk who
lived at the monastery and he would come
every once in a while and just do stuff
that monks aren't supposed to do like
clear clearing grass and that sort of
thing

and uh he had this dog that a guy called
dunderhead and that dog I mean the the

Burmese people in general really as a
general rule there are some dog lovers
there are some animal lovers but in Asia
dogs do not have the same kind of status
as they have in the West and his owner
really didn't treat him very well
apparently because all I'd have to do is
just talk nice to him and maybe pet him
a little bit and he would just be like
jumping around in this ecstasy this dog
I mean he would just he just adored me
just practically worshiped me
and it wasn't so much
did he worship me I mean it wasn't like
a narcissistic thing it's like oh this
dog worships me therefore I like it it's

just you know like the feeling was

Mutual I mean we just

There's Something About Dogs you know

we've got this convergent evolution

where we we form a symbiosis we just fit

together really nice and um

yeah it's like like my dog now Genghis

he's out in the backyard right now I

mean he's he's kind of the same way that

he's

I mean he just looks up at me adoringly

you know it's like when I go out into

the backyard it's like you know this is

It's the high point of his day

and uh I mean we just sincerely love

each other and I've been that way with

lots of dogs in my life and it'd be hard

to pick out one in particular
my favorite domesticated animal but it'd
definitely have to be a dog I've some of
my best friends in life have been dogs
so I'll just uh move on to the next
question here this is from Alan and I'm
I'm not sure
if Alan is even expecting
an answer and this wasn't under a q a
this is under a different video
uh but it's a question and he he posted
it so
um I think sometimes he just asks
rhetorical questions anyway
but I'll just read the question I mean
we've got so many questions might as

well add another one here so Alan says
it may be difficult where does it say in
terrible other tradition that most monks
won't experience Jonna apparently a lot
of Tibetan Monks haven't either and so
that so that's the point and purpose of
generating the wins there's one time
monk leader who one time Uncle leader
who had three thousand of his monks
learn Transcendental Meditation why
because it takes you to transcendental
Consciousness the sphere of nothingness
on the first day that you began
well I guess the main question here is
where does it say in terrible other
tradition that most monks won't
experience genre it says it in there

somewhere I just I mean

the meaning of John had changed

originally it just meant meditation

so first John anyone who's just sitting

there meditating properly even if it's

breathing in breathing out

in my opinion that would be first job

and so it's not all that hard to attain

but

Jonah has acquired the the status of a

superhuman mental state it's defined as

a right concentration in the mahasa but

even so apparently according to Orthodox

tradition right concentration involves

superhuman mental States

because

the four genres are considered to be
superhuman mental States and even most
monks do not pertain them in fact you
can find statements like one in a
million but I mean I mean that that
would be really sad if only one in a
million could even get to First genre
so

yeah apparently a lot of Tibetan Monks
haven't either John has acquired the
state of like a very refined advanced
contemplative State like a mystical
state

I wouldn't consider first genre to be
particularly mystical but once you get
up into second genre where you're no
longer thinking then I think that would

qualify as a mystical state that would
be like what
um a contemplative Roman Catholic would
call contemplation
or high contemplation
it's where you're no longer thinking
that's like in the contemplative orders
of Roman Catholicism probably Greek
Orthodox is similar if you're still
thinking it's called meditation you know
you're visualizing uh you know
certain aspects of Jesus's life or
you're we're using like a mantra you
know dear God please have mercy upon me
a sinner that sort of a thing or the Ave
Maria or or Hail Mary's or Lord's Prayer

or something

then that would be meditation but once

you stop thinking

and you're just clearing your mind of of

all mental States as well as you can

then you're getting up into

um contemplation

and that's what essentially what second

Jonah and above would be from a Buddhist

perspective from a terravonna Buddhist

perspective and most people just do not

attain these mystical States

and Alan here he really he was really

resisting the idea

that it's difficult to attain John I

mean originally John I just meant

meditation so that wasn't so difficult

to attain but somewhere relatively early
on in the development of Buddhist
philosophy it got turned into superhuman
mental States

and uh then later he's one one time monk
leader who had three thousand of his
monks learned Transcendental Meditation
why because it takes you to

transcendental Consciousness whatever
that means and the Sphere of nothingness
on the first day that you began yeah I
would call BS on that that

Transcendental Meditation

leads to the Sphere of nothingness which
in itself I mean

the sphere of nothingness is uh probably

an anachronism that I mean it wasn't taught by the Buddha himself in my opinion that it was originally like a metaphor for enlightenment or something that got turned into you know after this after nothingness kind of fell by the wayside as an interpretation of Enlightenment maybe because it was just like a feeble attempt or something that it got rejected but it already got Traction in the tradition so then they just relegated to this sub-enlightened but nevertheless very exalted contemplative State and the sphere of nothingness it would be a formless genre that would be um either a variation of or higher than

fourth and Janna which originally was probably the highest level of meditation you could possibly get to and to say that practicing Transcendental Meditation like TM like the Maharishi mahaj Yogi was teaching that the first day that you're already like at the higher levels of fourth genre yeah I just called BS on that maybe a few people but certainly not anywhere near to one percent would uh be experiencing a formless genre of their very first attempt at meditating so I think I'll just move on to the next question here this is from rui and rui

says hello Ponyo do you have a notion of
the term Yogi in the terrible water
tradition I have a dim recollection of
finding and some sort of commentarial
text I don't think it was ever used by
the Buddha but it looms the large in
Mahayana and vajra Yana tradition could
it be a subcontinental contamination of
sinhala teravada well I actually looked
up the term Yogi in in my polytopitica
which is digital on this computer as I
had previously uh implied
and Yogi only appears in later texts
they are canonical some of them like the
nedesa the Parisa Maga
um the the questions of King Melinda
have that I mean they're

they're old they're old enough some of
them at least to be canonical like in
the Burmese typica the the Melinda
Panna is canonical even though it's not
considered econonical in other

Traditions other terravada traditions
but um

so apparently

um yeah it's a later addition to

uh terravana Buddhist

like philosophical jargon or ethical
jargon

um so

uh I mean Yoga Yoga came up I think is a
term that's found in very ancient texts
so yoga the word yoga is contained in

very ancient texts but there it means
like the Yoke you know yoga keima is
like a rest from the Yoke it's sort of
like a metaphor for enlightenment you
know freedom from bondage kind of a
thing

um

but uh with regard to Yogi in terravara
it's it's a common term in Burma it's
it's actually incorporated into the
Burmese language where a yogi means a
lay meditator usually a female pulley
meditator in fact uh a Burmese lady
who's called a yogi she usually
um she has her hair in a bun if it's
unless she shaves it and she wears Brown
and usually has like a a Mala or like a

Buddhist Meditation rosary around her
neck and like a Tibet or a kind of scarf
thing over one shoulder it's like a like
a uniform

so

but it can just mean meditator in
general

in in uh terrible Buddhism

so let's see here I'll just move on to
the next question this is from kzen and
Kazan says if you could take a pill that
would instantly and permanently dissolve
all sexual desires while enhancing and
speeding up your spiritual path without
any side effects would you do it
and that reminds me of I used to think I

mean if they invented an Enlightenment
pill

you just take this pill and you will
become enlightened

um I used to think that most people
including most monks would run from that
pill as though they were running from a
rabbit demon-possessed snake

just because it's so scary you know it's
almost Enlightenment is almost like
death who you think you are stops being
who you think you are

but with regard to I mean if I could
take a pill that would instantly and
permanently dissolve all sexual desires
while enhancing and speeding up my
spiritual path as a monk even though I

might have dread in my heart because

lust can be enjoyable

then uh I'd have to do it but now I'm a

Layman I've Got a Woman

and uh yeah I mean I would not want to

dissolve all sexual desires while having

this sweet snuggly affectionate female

that um it is my manly duty to satisfy

if at all possible

and uh it's very pleasant I have to

admit

so yeah as a layperson now I've got

certain

huh I wouldn't want to call it duties I

mean they're they're like duties that I

enthusiastically

um carry out or attempt to carry out
so yeah I wouldn't I wouldn't take the
pill now just because I'm in a
relationship and you know
but uh as a monk I would have had to do
it even if uh I just had uh dread in my
heart I remember I took some kind of
meditation art medication I took kind of
medicine once in Burma and not only did
it cause my entire body to break out in
a rash but it completely or almost
completely erased my libido for for days
and I missed it I mean it was like it
just life just seemed just flat and
really kind of pointless
you don't have a libido it's like life
really does just seem like flat and

insipid

which I guess is the point if you're a a
monk

you know you want to get us flat and
insipid as possible and in a manner of
speaking but um yeah I'm not a labor I'm
I'm not a monk anymore and I'm no longer
celibate so

so I just I turned I'd politely decline
the pill I might take the pill and offer
it to somebody else or something

so the next question is from Aliens did
it

and Aliens did it says the Pali
translator Ken wheeler claims that
original Buddhism never taught the

doctrine of no self and the term anata
is used relationally in the nikayas that
is it is used to indicate what the self
is not as an apathetic methodology do
you think this is correct well that's in
one word No in fact I would hardly
consider Ken wheeler to be an actual
translator I've read some of his
translations and he just butchers the
poly language well at the same time just
bragging on his YouTube videos about how
he is the world's Authority on early
Buddhism and on Nepali Language and he's
just bullshitting people because he
can't get like simple polycorrect like
if you read his article on he's got this
theory that Maha kasapa who is the

Buddhist senior disciple after the
Buddha died The Mott Casper actually was
involved in murdering the Buddha which
is I mean slandering a saint I mean
that's a guarantee of Hell according to
Buddhist tradition

so he better be right he better get his
not not his facts straight because he's
not really dealing with facts because
he's translating terms like there's the
word Kamara which means metalsmith it's
based on Vedic Sanskrit it goes all the
way back to long before the Buddha you
know more than a thousand years before
the Buddhist time Kamara meant a
metalsmith or a blacksmith well maybe a

bronze myth earlier on

But Ken wheeler has like somehow added a

macron to the mara so that it's he

translates it as son of the evil one

because it was a metalsmith who fed the

Buddha his last meal you know the

Buddhist fed him this a kind of it was

like tainted pork or something and it

caused the Buddha to have like an attack

of like violent stomach pains and bloody

diarrhea and so forth and he died after

that so Ken wheeler is trying to

make him out as son of the evil son of

Mara when I mean obviously Kamara just

means metalsmith it's not even spelled

the same as Mara you know and Mara has

like a little macron a little line over

the a which is a different vowel from
the a without the macron in English you
know they're both a but in poly or or
whatever I mean it's totally different
letters like a long a and a short a
aren't even the same letter
so I mean he really he like he'll
translate cheetah which means mind
sometimes it means hard he'll translate
it as Soul as a way of proving that
Buddhism teaches the soul the thing with
Ken wheeler is I mean aside from
just bragging about he's the world's
leading Authority on this that and the
other not just on early Buddhism but
also on like uh it's some some aspects

of physics also apparently he's like the
world's leading Authority

but he's like some kind of neoplatonist
or

man I don't want to offend you know

platonists but I mean he believes in

like the the

perennial philosophy

you know that there is like an immortal

soul but it's it's not like a worldly

thing and and he he did very much insist

that Buddhism taught this

and it just Buddhism just didn't and so

he's got to like twist and warp and

stretch the poly language in order to

find his proofs

that that the Buddha did not teach no

self

and I mean I can sort of agree that the Buddha did not insist upon those self because in very early attacks like in the Attica Wagga you know it's referring to no self and no not self you know you just don't have a belief about it one way or the other

and I mean he he declares himself apathetic he like he follows you know Apple fastest I think that's part of his name on his YouTube thing but Apple fast I mean you don't talk about it you can't put it into words and here he is just insisting and insisting and insisting which is not apathetic at all

so yeah he's I I mean it's a stretch
even to call Ken wheeler a poly
translator and I'm not jumping at this
to to bash Ken wheeler but somebody did
ask this question and so I'm just uh
giving my honest opinion
but um yeah it's it's really hard
to stretch the poly text enough that you
can say that
anata is not a fundamental teaching that
no self is not a fundamental teaching
there are a lot of people who try and do
especially westerners
so they just do not like not having a
soul
or at least they do not like having not
having an ultimately real soul

you know as I mean if you can really meet with people in the west who consider themselves to be Buddhists but who will just rage and just say you are you are a son of Mara yourself you are evil you're going to hell because you say that the Buddha taught that there's no soul or no self when it's just right there in black and white and it's you really have to stretch and twist and and engage in all this sophistry in order to make the text not say that there is no self

but there aren't people that are like this especially especially Western Buddhists so I better just move on to

the next question here this is from

White Ash Piper

and white ash Piper says question of the day is being awake different than

Nirvana well it depends on

man this is I mean we're dealing with

what cannot be described in words again

but like Buddha literally means awakened

so it's kind of a metaphor for

enlightenment

and Nirvana is also a way of describing

enlightenment

um in the ethical sense

so

um yeah I mean there's definitely

yeah awake can mean Nirvana

but it's more like the attainment of

Nirvana rather than the metaphysical
state of Nirvana because the
metaphysical state of Nirvana there'd be
no no body or no being or anything to be
called awake

but it's all paradoxical I'm just going
to move on to the next question here

this is from Titus d ascentis

and Titus the ascentis says there's a
few excellent Buddhist jokes do you have
any favorites and if so would you tell
one

um you know I've never really liked
Buddhist jokes very much it just
especially jokes about the Buddha like
as a monk it's actually forbidden to

make jokes about Luna dama or Sangha
that it's it's an offense requiring
confession if you make a joke about
Buddha dama or Sangha because I mean
you're like in a way like
being sarcastic or belittling something
that is sacred
you know sort of like telling Jesus
jokes if you're a Christian
um so I have heard a few Buddhist jokes
but I never really appreciated them I've
seen some Buddhist memes that are good
so yeah Buddhist memes I'd be have be
more inclined to have favors but I'm not
set up here to show you any of my
favorite Buddhist memes
so so do I have any favorite Buddhist

jokes

I mean the only Buddhist joke that I can think of that that I'd even be willing to repeat is like how many Zen monks does it take to change a light bulb that's two wanted to change the light bulb and one not to change the light bulb

uh but that's not very funny I mean if you if you read the text you can find funny stuff like I I guess you could call the verse of the domapara that that has like that's made up of puns almost the entire verse of the Donald Potter and I forgot to look up exactly what number it is

but it's it's made up almost entirely of
puns

as you know the man who is faithless and
ungrateful a burglar who destroys
opportunity and who destroys
opportunities and eats vomit he truly is
the highest of men that you can read
this verse this way that they had to do
it on purpose

you know the man who was faithless and
ungrateful a burglar who destroys
opportunity and opportunities and eats
vomit he truly is the highest of men I
mean you could call that kind of a joke
you know it's a series of puns that I
mean obviously it's supposed to be
humorous or something so I mean I could

say maybe that's my favorite Buddhist
joke

maybe there's a lot of like Zen stories
and Zen cons that are funny and kind of
joke like but um I think I better just
move on to next question here so the
next question from Titus diazynthus is
how can a Buddhist prove that the
Universe was not created last Thursday
or more seriously put how do terravonna
Buddhists justify belief in rebirth it
is a known and well proven fact that
over time to various extent memories
degrade distort mutate more Fade Away
Etc hence the terrible uncertainty of
definite knowledge how can then one

prove that the Universe was not created
last Thursday let alone claim that
rebirth or reincarnation is a fact must
be by something other than memories yeah
I remember in a book by Bertrand Russell
I think it was human knowledge it's
scope and limits or it could have been a
different one

um he said that I mean really you cannot
prove that some deity with a strange
main sense of humor just created this
universe yesterday and just implanted in
everybody memories of things that that
never happened there's no way you can
prove that that didn't happen
you cannot prove that God created
everything yesterday and we just have

fake memories of things that happened
before then you can't prove that
and a Buddhist can't prove it either
maybe an enlightened Buddhist or an
enlightened being

you know they just get beyond that and
they just know Ultimate Reality you know
they just

you know it's all it becomes irrelevant
but uh let's see

yeah so how can you prove rebirth I mean
the average Buddhists can't prove
anything you can I mean nobody can prove
anything other than maybe something
that's entirely internal to your own
mind you might be able to prove uh like

a a theorem of Euclid or something just
or like chess moves or something in your
mind something that's entirely continued
within your own mind but when you're
dealing with something that lies outside
of your mind there's always going to be
uncertainty

so Spinoza talked about it David Hume
talked about it and it was
and that's one reason why they were
they're two of the most famous Western
philosophers because I mean they were
really they just pulled the rug out from
underneath everybody
they were just merciless really with
regard to Absolute knowledge the only
absolute knowledge that you can have is

enlightenment

so I mean everything else is just

conventional truth and I think he's he's

probably gonna call me out on something

here later on I vaguely remember it but

let's see let's just stick with this

question here

okay so a Buddhist cannot nobody can

prove that the Universe was not created

last Thursday neither a Buddhist nor

anybody else not an atheist not a

Christian nobody

or more seriously put how do you

terrible Buddhists justify belief in

rebirth

it's a convenient working hypothesis

period

it really is

and uh there's no way you could

absolutely prove it one way or the other

so I'll just move on to the next

question here three and speaking of

Thursdays have you read The Hitchhiker's
Guide to the Galaxy

has it not a subtle Zen Buddhist feeling

to it no I never read The Hitchhiker's

Guide to the Galaxy I think I saw like a

movie version of it a long time ago

but it's it's very vague and hazy so

I guess I'll just move on to the next

question that was an easy one those are

the easiest questions where I just say I

don't know I don't I don't know I never

read it I don't know the person

I don't know

so

and then uh

Titus theosynthesis last question here

and speaking of Zen notice a pattern

here once asked what is nirvana

Suzuki roshi replied they're actually

two Suzuki Roshes I'm not sure which one

is talking about seeing one thing

through to the end

so what is Nirvana and uh azen roshi

replied seeing one thing through to the

end for me a perfectly satisfying answer

I remember you answering some questions

about Nirvana Nirvana differences but oh

these degrading memories tried to read a
lengthy article but that gave me a
headache do you have a concise answer
what is nirvana my interpretation of
Nirvana is I mean from the metaphysical
point of view it is alternate reality
and from a ethical point of view it is
like attainment of Ultimate Reality or
just awareness of Ultimate Reality
especially if it's persistent you know
once you you just fully got it in it it
doesn't go away
you don't backslide from it
um but there's there's other ways of
describing Nirvana this the end of great
hate and delusion the end of Loba Del
Samoa the end of docom

or like I said earlier the in habitama
is the principle of cessation
so but I mean from my personal point of
view it's it's reality Nirvana is a
reality

so I'll just move on a nice question
here this is from ketchup

what is the best parita for possession
thank you

um

in Burma at least the the go-to the the
Panacea for

um like demonic entities or ghosts or
any anything that's trying to possess
you anything like that is the metal suto
that's according to tradition the

metasuta was developed or the the Buddha
came up with the metal suta as a way of
protecting monks from malevolent
non-human beings

so yeah I'd go with the metal suit also
it's got a lot of wisdom in it the
ratanasuta is mostly just worshipy
devotionalist stuff the atanatiasuta
also is largely worshipping like
devotionalistic stuff whereas the
metasuda actually has some meaty dhamma
to it that isn't just devotionism but
it's it's got real dhamma in it so that
would make it stronger too in my opinion
so I yeah I would recommend the metal
suto

so the next next question is from nirmit

and nirmit says can you make a video on
the dhamma Chaka suta
where you explain it in detail it's
theoretically possible I doubt that I'll
be doing it anytime soon but the dhamma
Chaka pawatanasuta is uh according to
tradition the Buddha's first sermon
after his Enlightenment where he lays
forth you know the the four noble truths
and the middle path and so forth
um

considered to be somewhat anachronistic
like Western Buddhist Scholars will say
Wells like KR Norman wrote a famous
controversial article saying that
um it is anachronistic that it's taking

for granted later developments in
Buddhist philosophy and so forth but um
yeah I can get to it I mean it would
yeah maybe

so I'll just move on a nice question

here this is from Joe Doe

and Joe does says what is the longest
time you sat in meditation for

and I really don't know the answer to
that I mean I know the longest time I've
sat in meditation without moving in the
full Lotus it was a little over two
hours

because I my legs are not very flexible
my I mean my father couldn't even squat
down on his heels because he was his
legs are so inflexible and I've I've

acquired a little bit of that I think so
the longest ever sat without changing
position would be a little over two
hours because as a monk I almost always
sat in the full Lotus

and uh doing it for more than an hour
started getting painful but there have
been times when I would just change
position every now and then and just
keep sitting

so yeah that might be more than three
hours or four hours or something but
um

yeah long meditation really didn't work
for me so much because it was such
it was so intense you had to maintain

this intense awareness

the whole time if you're meditating

correctly so I tended to prefer no more

than an hour you know sort of like the

way Zen Buddhists do chican Taza where

you know it generally they don't do it

for long periods of time

and also

um I learned the value of just

alternating walking and sitting

meditations so you sit for an hour you

get up and walk into your legs are

stretched and you know you can sit down

without pain again and then you sit down

and meditate some more and you just

alternate sitting and walking like

that's the standard mahasi method is you

sit for or first you walk for an hour
then you sit for an hour then you walk
for an hour then you sit for an hour you
just do that throughout the day
so that's pretty much what I was doing
although I wasn't really an advocate of
the monster method
so I'll just uh move on to the next
question here and this is from O'Rourke
and Rourke says thoughts on Churchill
your experience of Burmese opinion of
him the English in general and akand
Bharat or Indian hyper nationalism well
I never heard a Burmese person mention
Churchill as far as I know oh the
computer is telling me that I haven't

plugged it in yet

just a second

this keeps happening

continually forget to plug in the

computer when I'm

sitting in this room

there we go the computer just went ah

okay so yeah I don't remember any

Burmese person discussing Winston

Churchill to me

um

my opinion on Churchill

um I've been I've had some interactions

with like right winger types

or other types I suppose who just think

Churchill was evil and partly it's

because these same right winger types or

whatever they happen to be

generally prefer Hitler

and or like

um there's the historian uh David Irving

you know who who just despised Churchill

and Churchill is

um you know he's accused of being a

sellout to the Jews and so forth and so

on and so forth but I mean I admire

Churchill he was a good writer and uh I

think he was I mean he was he was seemed

to have been a good prime minister also

so

yeah I really have not been persuaded by

The Churchill is evil faction of of

History

um let's see I mean there's a lot of
stuff I don't know about him but
then it may be that he did have
wealthy Jews supporting him but then
again a lot of
you know a lot of politicians do I mean
it's hard to get amount to anything in
politics without wealthy Jews supporting
you I suppose
consider Donald Trump for example
so uh let's see here
yeah okay the Burmese opinion of the
English in general
um the government
they they used to use the English as a
scapegoat I mean like the military
dictatorship if things sucked it's

because of the British colonialists
[_] things up before they left the
country which wasn't true I mean Burma
was the richest country in Southeast
Asia under the British Raj and then very
shortly thereafter it became the poorest
country in Southeast Asia just due to
General incompetence
because Burma should not be a poor
country it's got its wealthy and natural
resources it's not grotesquely
overpopulated and it should be a
successful prosperous country but it's
just that the government is incompetent
and that's not just a military
dictatorship even before the military

dictatorship I mean it's like uh General
Aung San was going to be the first
president or prime minister you know the
first leader of free Burma after
Liberation from British colonialism and
he and almost his entire cabinet were
were assassinated by
some lone wolf gunman supposedly I'm
holding the toothpick so I can't do the
quotes right here we go
and then he was replaced by U Nu and U Nu
was an intelligent person he was a
devout Buddhist but he had some weird
ideas like he started planting coconut
plantations all over the country because
there's a certain Deva called Min
Mahagiri who likes coconuts and he was

trying to get on the good side of the Gods by having lots and lots of coconuts in the country I mean weird things like that weird superstitious things that that really do not help the country all that much unless Min mahagiri really did favor the country but apparently Min mahagiri didn't because the country just kept like sliding into Anarchy and Civil War until the the first time the military dictatorship took over who knew actually invited them to take over and then once they got things under the under control more or less they handed it back to unu and then it just started sliding into Anarchy and chaos and in

Civil War again and so so the second time the military just took over and just didn't give control back and then uh relatively recently you had the Democracy pro-democracy movement you know heavily endorsed by the Western liberal types and uh I guess that sort of fell through a few years later with uh the new military junta but so the the Burmese government will bad mouth like the British colonialists as just kind of a scapegoat for anything bad in the country it's because the colonialists did it or whatever which is just propaganda really but I think most Burmese people aside from just the

national pride of kind of resenting
having been colonized
and treated like coolies

um they have a fairly high opinion of
the West are of like America and the
British

um you know they think that America and
the British are are clever and they have
a good system and they wish that their
system more closely resembled the
American system although

um in some ways Burma is lucky that
they're under a military dictatorship
because it's uh keeps all the Walmarts
and McDonald's and stuff out of the
country

and uh you cannot serve both God and
Mammon and when you've got no Mammon to
serve it's easier to serve God or in
other words you're going to have more
dhamma in the country

because once people start getting rich
and fat and spoiled then they start
forgetting dhamma

so I'll just move on to rorke's next
question oh wait I didn't answer the
part about the akand Bharat or Indian
hyper nationalism I really don't know
that much about it

um there's a conservative
political

commentator that I watch on YouTube
sometimes doctors

doctor

ly what's his name

Steve Dr Steve Turley

and uh yeah he kind of Praises Indian

Nationalism because he's referring to

civilization States you know he's he's

talking about post-modernism is giving a

rise to civilization states where

globalism is fragmenting people aren't

believing in globalism anymore that even

um

what do you call post-modernism itself

has pretty much killed globalism because

globalism assumed that there is one

truth fits all that you know is a kind

of liberal democracy is just the best

kind of government and and you know

there are certain assumptions you know

like

civil rights human rights you know

freedom of religion and all this that it

just applies to everything and obviously

history has shown that some countries

just resist that like in the Middle East

trying to force liberal democracy onto a

country results in just really strong

pushback

and then you wind up with a king or

something

or a military dictatorship and so I mean

he's referring to India as one of these

civilization states that post-modernism

has allowed this this globalist Vision

to kind of fragment and so certain countries including Russia are like taking pride in their ancient traditions and in their nationality again and he sees that as a good thing and I mean whatever is bad for what is passing for globalism nowadays isn't all bad

so

um yeah that's about all I know about Indian hyper nationalism is just uh the idea of

Indians you know identifying in mass as Hindus and and Indians and taking pride in that and going back to their Roots into their traditions and so forth and

that's not entirely a bad thing and it's
to some degree inevitable

so I'll just move on to rorke's next
questions this is a really easy one

thoughts on the order of nine angles

and maybe it's not supposed to be nine

Angels it's spelled angles here thoughts

on the order of nine angles and I have

no idea what that is

nine angels I don't know what that is

either

I mean nine sisters

I've heard of that before

the nine sisters but I don't think

that's it so thoughts on the order of

nine angles

I don't have any thoughts on that

because I don't know what it is
so next question from rork thoughts on
the misanthropic luciferian order I find
their conception of chaos interesting
and somewhat analogous to Kali and
nibana of course by they
gonna put the toothpick down again they
I mean the three people who are ever a
member of the cult which is another
interesting point yeah and I've as far
as I know I've never heard of the
misanthropic luciferian order either
this is maybe some kind of uh
kind of neo-satanism that doesn't
necessarily worship Devils but is just
sort of

um

like atheistic and

I don't know yeah I've never had any

interest at all

anything that goes by Satanism not even

very much uh interest over the course of

my life in paganism other than maybe

like classical

Greco-Roman paganism that would be the

most interesting kind of paganism to me

like neoplatonism

um that would be interesting to me but

I'm uh yeah I'm I'm almost totally

ignorant

of of like luciferian orders

misanthropic or otherwise

so I'll just move on to roork's next

question here

do you really believe in Buddhism or at

least in what you consider are the

historical teachings of the Buddha I

hope it's not an insulting question but

you are constantly espousing heterodox

beliefs and openness to being wrong and

it seems like a short step away to

simple atheism and agnosticism

um no I'm more of a Buddhist than

anything else and I am happy to say that

um in my studies of trying to find out

what the original teachings of go to My

Buddha were that those are the teachings

that I accept the most like the Attica

wag of the sushini Pata I mean that body

of text right there was enough to keep me in robes as long as I was in Rome's because there's a lot of stuff that that I do not consider to be authentic Buddha watching or the teachings of the Buddha that is later developments same with Christianity same with just about any religion

any religious tradition you know you start off with like a like an archaic core of teachings and then as it becomes a popular religion it just starts mutating like a virus especially in the first few centuries it just explodes in this this

it's almost like the the the the Cambrian explosion in in biology where

all these life forms just ooh
and all these weird forms and everything
and that's that happens in religions too
when it takes off it becomes a popular
movement then you got all sorts you know
throwing in there two cents and changing
the thing a lot but I am happy to say
that my studies trying to get as close
to what the Buddha originally taught is
possible not just according to my own
judgment but the Judgment of Scholars
that I respect that you know serious
Scholars
that uh yeah that um that is the stuff I
believe the most it just Rings true
there's like this intuitive yes to it

so yeah I do really believe in Buddhism
or at least in what I consider are the
historical teachings of golden mabuto
yeah and I am going with the working
hypothesis that godama Buddha was an
enlightened being if that even means
anything he was a extremely highly
Advanced Sage

so yeah I think I'll just move on to uh
rourke's next question

and that is thoughts on RFK Jr and
really I really don't know much about
RFK Jr I haven't sat through any of his
talks

you know any of his interviews you know
just little bits and pieces I know that
he talks funny because of some health

issue that he had

um you know very like Gravelly scratchy

you know almost uh non-verbal what do

you say

I'm not sure what the word is

but uh and that he's also kind of down

on the pharmaceutical industry because

you know he's saying that the whole the

coronavirus thing was just

um largely a hoax perpetrated by World

governments

or national governments in a globalist

cabal or something

um but yeah I mean he's better than

Biden

just about anybody would be better than

Biden I think

because Biden is essentially a vegetable

so let's see

I guess uh

I'll ask I'll just see what's herok's

next question here also thoughts on

metaphysical atomism does Buddhism say

anything about the ultimate nature of

samsaric reality in regards to atomism

other than the easy rejoinder that it

doesn't really matter because it is an

Ultimate Reality well amidhama is

atomism par excellence

if I understand what he's talking about

the metaphysical atomism you know sort

of like Democritus or something that

everything is made up of atoms yeah I

think Orthodox Buddhism

which I don't necessarily follow

strictly

and I'll be dumb a philosophy has

everything divided up into atoms except

for a few ultimate realities are not

divided up into particles nibban on

itself is not divided up into particles

and if I remember correctly there's uh

like empty space which according to

Abhidhamma is only exists in between

particles

that you can't just say there's infinite

empty space there's only the only

reality of space is the space between

two other things

so that would not be Atomic either other than indirectly because it has to be between atomic things but even mental states are Atomic according to um Orthodox Terra water tradition I don't believe it I don't I mean it's not found in the sutras at all this atomism that got developed later on it's not found in the sutras or maybe in like really late ones maybe that sort of indirect mentions of it so because Buddhism say anything about the ultimate nature of some sarc reality in regard to atomism yeah I mean it's it's completely Adam animistic I mean other than that each atom is itself blinking on and off like a trillion

times a second so if they're not an atom
in the like the sense of Democritus who
are saying you know they're they're like
Eternal or something that they cannot be
destroyed because they last only one
moment and then a replaced by another
one and they just they keep flashing off
and on so they're it's animism in time
as well as in space so it's even more
atomistic than atoms that are just
Eternal like 19th century physics
assumed

so I think I'll just move on a nice
question here this is from keep devenia
and keep the vinya says oh this is gonna
be a long one

I just noticed we've already been going about two hours almost two hours and I I don't know how far down this thing I am keep the veneer says would it have been better if you had lived as a monk in Thailand instead of Burma the Thais Place more emphasis on the vineyard rules and less on the abidama while it is the exact other way around with the Burmese um no actually I always consider myself lucky that I lived in Burma instead of Thailand that I was ordained in a Burmese tradition instead of a Thai tradition and partly it's because the ties are way more Conformity oriented the Burmese you know they just conform

this

spontaneously you know they're very
Conformity oriented but they don't make
a rule of it they don't they don't
enforce it because it just happens so
naturally to them that they just conform
but then I didn't conform and they just
kind of let me not conform
so I mean in Thailand you know you'd
have to do things that you knew weren't
correct just because everybody else did
it and that's what you have to do too
because everybody else is doing it also
the Burmese are much more into
meditation than the ties
so the Burmese are more into a

scholarship including abhidham and meditation whereas the the ties are more into vinya and do Tonga but I could practice Winnie and do Tonga as strictly as I pleased in Burma I just I was just doing it on my own but I was living alone as much as possible too so I mean the Conformity stuff really wasn't much of an issue

so I'll just uh move on to keep the vanilla's next question here because there's a load of questions have you ever listened to speeches of ashin wirathu is your Burmese good enough to understand him is he really calling for violence against Muslims or is it Western propaganda

um no I've never listened to a speech of
Asian weirathu

um my Burmese I mean I'd have to listen
very intently this I'd have to really
concentrate in order to understand like
a a recording of a dhama talk in Burmese
um is he really calling for violence
against the Muslims or is it Western
propaganda as a monk he has to sort of
dance around actually calling for
violence but it's implied you know we
have to get rid of these Muslims I mean
you know it sort of implied that I mean
obviously the Muslims aren't necessarily
going to be willing to leave so you just
have to get rid of the Muslims whether

they want to leave or not kind of stuff
so there is some implied violence and uh
I mean he will say that he's not
endorsing violence but in order to get
what he wants I think a certain amount
of violence is pretty much necessary
um so

yeah I mean I mean when he's called like
the the face of Buddhist Terror you know
like on that Time Magazine that's
Western propaganda

because I mean he's saying what a lot of
other Burmese like um
who is more famous than Russian we are
also in Burma uh he says kind of the
same stuff he's saying you know it's not
good to have Burma overrun by Muslims we

have to do something about it and just kind of leaves it hanging you know they can't really endorse violence you know they're not calling for genocide or anything like that

but I mean it is kind of implied if you if you work out the ramifications of getting rid of Muslims in Burma I mean it's there's probably going to be some uh a certain amount of aggression going on in both directions

so I think I'll just move on to the next question from uh keep doing here

have you ever used a loop of prayer

beads for mantras back in Burma and is

it common for monks to use them there

it's very common for monks to use malas
or prayer beads and I got one or two
as a monk because sometimes I'd feel
sleepy and I had this idea it was like
an experiment that if I just have to
keep my thumb moving to work the beads
it would help to keep me awake and I
experimented with it a little bit but
it's it's too
kind of it's not subtle enough of a
meditation you know it's it's too coarse
of a meditation that
um I didn't like it very much so I I did
it very little
so I'll just move on the next question
which is what is your view on
anti-natalism isn't it better for

couples not to have children since they are one of the biggest attachments one can have also according to the Gaba wakandi suta the Buddha said the following Nanda I do not extol the production of a new existence even a little bit nor do I extoll the production of a new existence for even a moment why the production of a new existence is suffering for example even a little bit of vomit stinks in the same way Nanda the production of a new existence even a little bit even for a moment is suffering therefore whatever comprises birth namely the rising of matter its subsistence its growth and

its emergency Rising subsistence growth
and emergence of feeling
conceptualization conditioning forces
and Consciousness all that is suffering
subsistence is illness growth is old age
and death therefore Nanda what
contentment is there for one who is in
the mother's womb wishing for existence
so

get back up to the top of this question
what is my view on anti-natalism well
um if you're going to renounce the world
I mean if you really think that any
existence is suffering it should be
abandoned then you renounce the world
you don't get married you don't have
kids you don't have a family you might

not even have many friends you don't
have money you don't have a home you
just radical renunciation but with
regard to couples I mean once you've got
a couple I mean a lot of couples are
living in countries that do not have a
welfare state and so their social
security is their kids supporting them
after they get old
so like in Burma you don't have kids
you're just gonna be like the uh the
drunk uncle or Aunt the the old maid
Aunt living with with like your sister's
family or something but there's there's
got to be children
somehow in order to keep Society going

so I mean if you want to renounce
Society then yeah of course you
shouldn't have children but I mean if
you're not renouncing Society I mean it
may be necessary or it may even be
spiritually a good thing for you because
maybe you're just not ripe for a
completely letting go of some sorrow and
all in one go

so for some people not having children
is best I didn't have any children
so

but I was a monk for 30 years if if I
wasn't a monk I probably would have
gotten married and if my wife wanted to
have children I mean I think having
children is more important for some

women than it is for most guys that you know they just kind of identify with you know their maternal instincts to some degree that yeah I mean it'd be my duty as a man if my wife couldn't really be happy without kids then yeah I might agree to to the most maybe three absolute tops but yeah that's that's all academic now because it's unlikely that at my age I'm going to be having any kids so let's see yeah I mean for monks that's fine and for some laypeople that's fine but it's not going to work for everybody and I

mean the human race is just gonna die
off if nobody has kids and then the
monks are going to starve too because
there's going to be no lay people
feeding them

so I think I'll just move on to keep the
money as next and last question can a
monk tell a layperson what he likes to
eat if he gets asked and yeah

you if a monk if a layperson asks you
what your favorite food is then the monk
can say you know I like this or that and
uh or if the layperson says you know if
if there's anything that you want just
let me know you know they give Advanced
permission then you can ask for like
fancy food like meat or

occurred there's there's a list of fancy
me fancy foods Choice Foods including
Meat and Fish and that's also found in
the Mahayana padimoka rules
so they may insist that Buddha did not
allow the eating of meat look their own
putty mocha rules which are very archaic
going way back to the early days of
Buddhism you know they have these same
rules saying you know you can't ask for
meat or fish unless you're sick or
you've been given permission to ask for
such things
so I'll just move on to the next
question here this is from Conrad
and Conrad says what is a skillful

action and what is an unskillful action
skillful and unskillful are not clear to
someone judging the actions of an
arahant there's a pseudo where the
Buddha says that even if something is
true but not beneficial it is not worth
saying it or something is true
beneficial but consequently it will
bring suffering it is good to say it I
wish I could remember the name of this
sutta there's a saying I like from Padma
sambhava my realization is higher than
the sky but my observance of karma is
finer than grains of flour only an araha
can have a fine observance
of the karmic effect of his actions
exclamation point there's something

interesting about the mahayana's
perspective on
bodhisattvas

little buddhistava can act in an evil
way to each his own medicine

after Lord Buddha I bow to Lord Duca

okay well I guess the question is way up
at the top here

what is skillful action and what is
unskillful action well physically

unskillful action would be breaking the

the five precepts you know I was like

killing stealing sexual misconduct which

would include adultery promiscuity rape

that kind of a thing

um wrong speech which is mainly telling

of Lies but also like bad-mouzing people
and so forth and then also taking a wine
ale or intoxicants which cause
cloudedness of mind

so that would physically be unskillable
actions also uh you could include like
right livelihood so

um so if wrong livelihood would include
you know selling weapons selling poison
selling slaves selling animals for
Slaughter and so forth

to those I mean at the surface level the
external physical level that would be on
skillful action with regard to
unskillful mental actions and there's it
this is standard in the text you know
it's like greed hate and delusion pretty

much Encompass all of them you know
selfishness and stinginess and
let's see just Envy ill will you know
all these kind of mental states that a
sage would not have presumably
that they would be they would be
unskillful and anything that isn't that
way is skillful so you can just sit
there not doing anything and that would
be skillful because skillful is just
anything that isn't unskillful so being
skillful can just be totally effortless
you can just sit there and not do
anything and that's skillful so
let's see
skillful and unskillful are not clear

for someone judging the actions of an
arhan yeah because you don't know what
the mental states of an arohaunt are
because really I mean if you get past
the surface level whether something is
wholesome or unwholesome depends on the
mental States it depends on the motives
like the will that is motivating the
action and you may not know what the
motive is I mean sometimes it's fairly
obvious it's almost like screaming and
pounding on somebody you know that they
don't have good motives

but um

especially if they just walk up to
somebody and start screaming and
pounding on them

for no apparent reason

but um

yeah with regard to an arhot I mean it's

like once they've they've crossed this

they've crossed the flood they throw the

raft away you know they don't need

Dharma practice anymore they might do it

spontaneously just just because but

still I mean

it's like they've they've gone beyond

ordinary ethics because they no longer

have these gross motives for their

actions so their actions outwardly might

appear really awful or questionable at

best but you don't know what their their

motives are if they're an enlightened

Sage they're not going to have bad motives

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

and Matthew said just curious how many hours a day did you usually meditate as a monk well for my first at least 10

years I was probably averaging at least six hours a day of meditation I was

really going for it and then it

gradually tapered off until towards the

end I was hardly meditating and all just

because I had stopped making progress

and it was just too frustrating to

continue with it

so because I it was just sort of

treading water at best and my best

meditation in my life occurred between
like the years 2000 and 2004.

and just and just that was it you know
it was that those are the Glory Days or
something and I never was able to
regain that

except just sort of like the residual
like residual effects of having having
attained it to begin with

so yeah at least my first 10 years I was
averaging like six hours a day

because I was doing it a lot I was
meditating a lot

so let's just move on to the next

question here this is from bodhisatta969

and bodhisatta 969 says do you think

that Buddhism in the west mainly
attracts people who have health or
mental problems because then you become
aware of your own mortality from my part
I've had problems with cardiac
arrhythmia arrhythmia since I was about
19 sometimes better sometimes worse for
my part I then looked for something
non-material and ended up with the
Buddhist teachings suffering old age
sickness death I'm in my mid-30s now
otherwise healthy however I still feared
death maybe I'm looking for something to
take away this fear
well they they used to say that the
samurai would go and train in Zen
monasteries to overcome their fear of

death and Buddhist practice really does help you to overcome your fear of death it's true but uh that's not the main question here is the main question is do you think that Buddhism in the west mainly attracts people who have health or mental problems well not necessarily I do think that because Buddhism isn't mainstream you're gonna get attract a lot of people who don't follow the mainstream which is going to include more people that are kind of On The Fringe psychologically so you're going to get quite a few nutty people attracted to Buddhism you know non-conformists at the very least

eccentrics and so forth you know they're
they're more likely to be Buddhists
um in a non-budist culture just because
you're going to have non-conformists uh
becoming Buddhists
because the conformists will follow
Christianity or just scientific
materialism or whatever uh with regard
to health problems like physical health
problems I'm unaware of people with
physical health problems being more
attracted to Buddhism because every
religion has its way of dealing with
physical health problems
if I had physical health problems I
might be more attracted to something
like Christian Science

so I think I answered that question so
I'm just going to move on to the next
one which is from siores s-j-o-r-s
that sounds scandahuvian
and it's yours I think says regarding
that part where Ponyo says that the
Hindu Buddhist Heavens are like
Celestial versions of Indian palaces in
shakyamuni's time one view would be to
claim that these Realms don't exist
they're products of their culture
projecting their values into the
Afterlife another would be to say that
they exist aren't exactly like that but
were so described to Indians as a
skillful means another still that they

exist are exactly like that and even non-indian converts will wind up in a very Indian coded heaven after they die some would find it odd that people living on a different planet in a different culpa for instance would be reborn in a heaven resembling Iron Age India or a Heavenly Jerusalem where any Earthbound culturally specific heaven for that matter a fourth I think possible would view would be the heavens exist but don't have a definite form they are rather constructed by the collective Karma of the aspirants and resemble that to which they aspire to thus Indian Heaven would appear Indian Etc they are real places as far as real

goes in samsara to those born there not
solipsistic dreams their form is stable
cannot be changed it will like elusive
dream as the day was delighting in their
Creations might be able to do in their
own Realms and exist for a very long
time I think swedenborg has a similar
account it's all speculation but we're
talking about sex in heaven after all
anyway what do you think question mark
there's a question Mark at the end there
so that that makes it a question for
this video and this was under the sex in
Heaven video that I did a little while
ago with Brian Rue
does Brian Rue wanted something

clickbaity to attract people to Buddhism
so he's talking about the Magnificent
sex in the lower Heaven realms
um but with regard to his four
possibilities here I think two and four
are are likely so one so his second
possibility is that these Heaven Realms
exist aren't exactly like what the way
they are described but we're so
described to Indians as a skillful means
and then
or just their best guess really
and then
um his fourth one was that uh
um the heavens exist but don't have a
definite form but they are rather
constructed by the collective Karma of

the aspirants and resemble that to which
they aspire to yeah I think both of
those are probably interacting
so because we're already well over two
hours here I'm gonna try and be a little
more concise

and try not to ramble so much

ah we'll have a drink of milk every now
and then

and now we've got hey it's TIG who is a
wise guy and he asks kind of
kind of jokey kind of questions
sometimes

and his TIG says do you like pizza what
kind of pizza do you prefer do you
prefer thick crust or thin crust pizza

do you think Pizza has appreciably
changed since your childhood also do you
think that beer is the best accompanying
beverage to Pizza I certainly do so
so yeah I like pizza I think almost
everybody likes Pizza I think the only
person I ever met that really didn't
like pizza was my father who said he
didn't like oregano and it is true that
I used to work on Japanese ships a long
time ago and they considered Pizza to be
girly food that it was sort of
considered to be un Macho for a Japanese
man to eat pizza at the time this is
like back in the 1980s
so what kind of pizza do I prefer uh
black olive and onions

and do you prefer thick crust or thin crust pizza uh either one I'm I can I can accept either way maybe I probably kind of go more towards the thick crust variety

and do do I think Pizza has appreciably changed since my childhood not that I have noticed also I think there's maybe more variety that's about it I mean when you're a kid it's like pepperoni

also do you think that beer is the best accompanying hashtag beverage to Pizza I certainly do so not necessarily I don't necessarily think sometimes you just want to drink milk you know or maybe a nice apple cider

for example

so I'll just move on to the next

question from Stevens who I think was

following up on uh hey it's Tig

because Stephen says how about Pizza Hut

do you like Pizza Hut if so what is your

favorite crust that they have I used to

work for Pizza Hut 20 years ago how do

you think Pizza Hut compares to its

competition in the 80s and 90s up until

today do you ever dine in one of actual

dining Huts before yum brands downsized

Pizza Hut does anyone ever give pizza

delivery as alms food

well the thing is my mind was poisoned

against Pizza Hut back in the 1980s like

the late 80s because there was this

other Pizza franchise called Pizza Haven
and they had good pizza there and it was
you know they had good commercials too
it's like have a pizza Craven go to
Pizza Haven pizza Haven is Pizza Heaven
you know you're gonna be the guy
crawling on his hands and use of the
desert on Pizza Pizza you know it was
good commercials good pizza and then
they got bought out by Pizza Hut and
then all of a sudden they had like this
spongy oily crust and their sauce tasted
like ketchup
so I've never liked Pizza Hut since then
I've never never voluntarily made any
effort

to get Pizza Hut pizza ever since then
ever since they betrayed me
by buying out pizza Haven which was
better Pizza
and then they all turned into
greasy spongy crust with ketchup sauce
so I don't know what kind of crusts they
have or anything like that and if you
used to work for Pizza Hut 20 years ago
I'm sure that you're still a good person
and I don't know how they compare with
the competition
personally I'd rather go Papa John's or
something
and uh did I ever dine in one of the
actual dining houses now I never did and
uh here we go does anyone ever give

pizza delivery as alms food and yes when
I was a monk in California
uh several times I got pizza
um like somebody wanted to offer almond
food but they live hundreds of miles
away so what they would do is they would
call a pizza place near my Monastery and
have a pizza delivered in the morning
and then I would eat it so yeah I've got
I got uh pictures of me with uh I got
one picture especially this guy donated
a pizza to me and I it shows me I'm
holding it and somebody I had another
Monk take my picture holding the pizza
so I can send him the picture and say
and see I got your pizza and I ate it it

was good

and I even got pizza occasionally in Asia although the Asians as a general rule that really do not have a firm grasp on the concept of pizza similarly with bread in general they really don't understand bread like Japanese pizzas that I ate on the ships they had like seaweed on them and stuff and uh yeah I was like I remember in Burma you get little packets of ketchup with your with your pizza and it was like cardboard crust it was really awful so but yeah sometimes people do get pizza delivery as all in food so I'll just move on to the very last question this is weird

it takes me by surprise

so yeah this isn't going to be a three
hour long video because boom we're at
the very last question and this is from
Kubo

it was a recent uh Joiner of uh the
Discord server and a recent Joiner of
the the Subscribe Star channel too so
loot

and makubo says do you think the samsara
Nirvana distinction is analogous to
kant's concept of phenomenon and
pneumanon well yeah I think there's a
lot of analogy that could be brought
between the two like it's
I think Khan's conception of you know

the thing is it seems and the thing in
itself are really close to the Buddhist
conception of conventional truth and
ultimate truth so ultimate truth is the
only real truth and that's in my opinion
Nirvana nibano although from the
Orthodox position that would be like the
abhidham of philosophy and then
conventional truth is just volhara like
just you just talk
as though some sorrow were real because
you're just in samsara and you don't
have much choice
and so yeah Khan's conception of
phenomenon and numenon would be like the
the Buddhist conception of conventional
truth and ultimate truth which to me

is like samsara and Nirvana although in Orthodox Buddhism samsara is ultimately real is just as ultimately real as nibana is according to like the abhidham philosophy and the commentarial tradition samsara is ultimately real these individual atoms of matter and and mind are ultimately real just as real as nibana is and that's one reason why I just cannot take uh the Orthodox like abudama philosophy and the commentary tradition very seriously because I just don't buy it I do not think that multiplicity is ultimately real or that that physical matter just absolutely distinct from mind just qualitatively

different from mind just totally
different not just two aspects of the
same thing like like Spinoza taught but
mind and matter are just completely
different completely distinct and
ultimately real dinosaur Orthodox
terravonna teaches and I just cannot buy
it I just do not swallow it

so

um my comparison of samsara and Nirvana
would be very close to Khan's conception
of the phenomenon and the pneumon but
um the Orthodox tarawana position
wouldn't wouldn't be the same

so

I guess that's it

I did it

by golly

take my last sip of milk as a reward

and if you have any questions feel free

to ask

because inquisitive as you please

although please uh don't ask more than

the six questions per video because as

you can see the the lists I mean it was

it was lots of questions here

and uh feel free to leave your questions

in the comments below or if you have

access to the Discord server or

subscribe star you can leave them there

anything you think I've been a position

to answer although remember I am not

well versed in Satanism or Pizza Hut

so

you may want to ask somebody else

questions about those

and uh like And subscribe feel free to

look at the URL links and check them out

including my books

be happy

pale audience

welcome to episode 58 of question and
answer and I am your host Ponyo basa
again

probably none of you realize that I did
this q a yesterday

and I get to the end of it I mean the
the light on the cameras lit up

everything's going I push the button and
everything and then it didn't record so

I'm gonna have to do the the same q a
over again and nobody even cares

but uh considering that I did it all
before yesterday all before comma
yesterday

um maybe you'll get a slightly higher

quality of answers and rambling

digressions this time

so we're gonna get ready here I gotta

open the beverage

and insert the umbrella to demonstrate

my

breeding

and uh

whatever else that it demonstrates

having a paper umbrella in my in my

drink my beverage

got the extra backup beverage just in

case and we're ready to start answering

questions I'm commencing to start

answering questions here

and the first question is from Saint

sword and Saint sword has been uh

he's been commenting a lot usually not with question marks so I haven't been answering them but he's been commenting a lot on how religions rely on appeals to Authority and he doesn't like that how you follow a religion just because some Authority says so you know like the Bible or the polytopitica or whatever so anyway he asked this question does the justification that monks have in their views essentially reduce down to either quote this is what my tradition has taught unquote or quote this is what I read in the Canon

unquote if yes does this bother you at all well

I mean you can say they're an appeal to Authority is logically invalid but then again most of our knowledge if not all of our knowledge is logically invalid because logic ultimately has to rest on premises or like like an unquestioned axiom I mean you eventually have to start off with something that is unproven

so

and then like science is mainly inductive you know it's just going with the assumption that things will continue happening the way they have been happening which we don't know for sure

and uh also I mean with regard to just
about anything in this world like
especially something like history or
like foreign cultures or science even I
mean you don't prove everything yourself
you have to rely on authority figures to
tell you what to believe with regard to
ancient Rome for example

so

um

also most people just don't have the
wisdom to just forge their own Dharma
their own dharmic path you know they
look to a teacher
and when you look to a teacher someone
who you consider to be wiser than you

you take their word for it because you know that you don't know and so you are at least hoping that they know and so out of trust in them you follow their instructions and there is some of that in just about any kind of field I mean

car mechanics you know it's like someone's teaching you how to fix cars you just trust what they tell you and then

um I mean you just get your car take your car to the shop they tell you you need a new alternator I mean you're just gonna go by an appeal to Authority because you just assume that the car mechanic knows better than you do

with regard to what's wrong with the car
or you go to a doctor and they tell you
you're pre-diabetic or something God
forbid you know and then you just I mean
you might go for a second opinion but if
the second guy says the same thing the
second doctor then you'll think well
maybe I ought to go on a a diet or
something

and the same is true with religion you
just assume that some people know better
than you do and so you take their word
for it and it is true that early

Buddhism was

to some degree counter to that like you
read the optical log it says don't

believe anything of course even if you
don't believe anything you might be not
believing anything out of respect for
the authority you know the Buddha saying
don't believe anything
so it's really kind of a conundrum we're
living in samsara which is uh
I mean it's just a logically invalid
state of existence
so
um so I guess the question is does it
bother me that most monks
justify their beliefs just
through appeals to Authority appeals to
their teacher appeals to the texts
the appeals to tradition
um just the assumption that the Buddha

was fully enlightened in the texts
accurately reliably State what the
Buddha was was teaching
um yeah it doesn't bother me because
it's just human nature I mean if I was
bothered by humans behaving like humans
I'd be bothered all the time I mean you
have to have a certain amount of
compassion and most people as I already
implied do not have the wisdom to just
work it out on their own so you go with
these instructions
the very advanced
uh like practitioners like the ones that
the the Attica Wagga was directed
towards you know already advanced then

yeah you can just set aside all systems
and you know sort of like J Krishnamurti
um although even most of Jay
Krishnamurti's disciples probably were
just following along what Jay Christian
already told them to believe even though
he was continually railing against it
so

yeah I mean it's just human nature that
people are going to follow along with
some tradition or other I mean it's just
built into us so it doesn't bother me I
mean to the extent that you're able to
transcend Traditions that's good but
until you get to that stage you're going
to have to follow instructions until you
get to the stage where you're able to

just transcend all instructions

so I think I'll just move on to the next

question here and this is from Josh

and Josh says Hey Ponyo Bossa I've

watched almost all your q and A's almost

all you didn't watch all of them

but this is my I'll start over hey Ponyo

boss I've watched almost all your q and

A's but this is my first time commenting

this weekend I had to take my 17 year

old cat to the animal hospital because

she was in the final stages of kidney

failure

I had to make the decision to put her to

sleep because she wasn't eating or

drinking at all and it was either her

slowly starving to death or giving her a peaceful way out I know I'll have to accept the karma for that decision and I'm trying to look at it like I'll just bite the bullet and accept whatever consequences come from that whenever I think about it I wish that whatever form she is in now that she is well happy and peaceful how should someone deal with the loss of someone close to you and how to process negative Karma so first I'll just say my condolences to your your kitty

I like cats

but this is actually two questions here the first question is how should someone deal with the loss of someone close to

you

and with regard to that I would just direct you to certain sutas of the sutiny pattern they've got the jarrassuta of the Attica Wagga you got the Ouija suta that I recited or read aloud

um in a recent video on in search of death and also there's the Salah Sutton that are all dealing with death the inevitability of death and how a wise person should respond to a death in their in their life you know in in their among their Close Associates and so forth so rather than just try to give you like a synopsis of what to do you're

better off just going straight to the
sutras and read the Salas s-a-l-l-a

[Music]

j-a-r-a or the uh

v i j a y a

and uh they're on the Sutton ipata

um with regard to the second part of the
question how do you process negative

Karma well I'm I've I've given the

simile more than once in these q and A's

that there is a suit I don't remember

which one

where the Buddha Compares Bad Karma or

akusala Kama to a handful of salt and if

you mix that handful of salt in a cup of

water it's so salty that you can't drink

it but if you mix that same handful of

salt in a pool of clear water
then it may be so diluted down that you
hardly even taste the salt so the
meaning of that is of course that if
you've got bad karma you can't just poof
it out of existence you can't go make
confession to a priest and have him
absolve you of your sins you can't have
some Taoist or Shinto priest shake a
paper wand at you and make your Bad
Karma go away it just it's gonna run its
course but what you can do is attenuate
the Bad Karma by diluting it down with
lots and lots of good karma
so you seem to have done pretty well
um Josh here

with with his cat I mean he had the cat
put to sleep he had the cat using eyes
so he is responsible for the death of a
conscious being but it was motivated by
compassion and love which are
skillful

so it was attenuated by the fact that he
was trying to reduce the animal's
suffering and just continued doing
meritorious deeds and you know it's just
you're gonna have way more Good Karma
than Bad Karma so that when the bad
stuff happens

um you know it's not so bad
and

oh I was just gonna say something and
then I forgot I'll take a drink

ah what was I gonna say it was really
good too

um

man that's that's so weird sometimes you
know you're just it's right there and
then you just kind of look a different
direction in your brain and then it's
gone

so

let's see

love and compassion

golly man it's frustrating when that
happens it's sort of like you can't
remember somebody's name that you should
know and then you're just like going
through the alphabet and stuff but in a

q a like this I can't sit here going
through the alphabet unless I turn off
the thing and turn it back on but I like
doing everything in one take

so

um oh yeah I remember now

so it's like a monk

that's the one reason why monks are not
supposed to have pets they're not
supposed to have close family ties is
because this sort of thing can happen
like like with Josh's cat here

um where I mean you've got duties and
you've got responsibilities uh as a and
I mean as a layperson you have more of
these you have a family to protect I
mean no man is worthy of the name man if

he's just going to let his wife get
assaulted or his children get abducted
because he doesn't want to hurt the
criminal who's harming them

I mean you just you've got to bite the
bullet and take take a few hits

sometimes if you're a lay person and so
I think that Buddhism really should
emphasize uh stoicism for Lay people you
know it's like sometimes you may have to
kill you've gotta like de-louse your
child or whatever

you're gonna have to kill a little
little parasitic insects or or whatever
it is you might have to shoot an
intruder who's trying to break into your

house

so I mean you just have to accept have a certain amount of stoicism where you're just willing to take the hit you're willing to accept the responsibility for your action so that when unpleasant consequences come your way you can accept it with a emoticum of equanimity you know you just have to be tough to some degree

so I think I'll just move on to the next question and this is from Dawn and again I'm sorry about your cat maybe you'll get a new cat that's that's good too

so the next question is from dawn and Dawn says do you gain Merit

by transferring Merit and I'm checking to make sure that I'm actually recording this time I'm a little bit paranoid about it now so Don says do you gain Merit by transferring Merit and this is kind of a trick question because transferring Merit really doesn't work I mean is there's called sharing Merit and it's done a lot in terravada Buddhist countries like Burma like um Burmese people they'll go to a ceremony they'll go to the monastery they'll offer food to the monks you know they'll listen to a sermon you know they might donate some other stuff and then they'll share their

Merit there's like the ceremony
and uh
especially they'll do this like if a
close family member dies you know
they'll donate stuff to the monastery in
the name of the deceased person trying
to give Merit to that person but the
only way that it works according to
strict Orthodox terravonna is if the the
deceased person has become a kind of
ghost or spirit that is actually
attending the ceremony or is able to
hear and see what's going on because the
way it works you share a merit you can't
really share Merit you can't share your
karma with somebody else at least
according to Orthodox Buddhism

so what happens is
um you share you do a meritorious deed
and then you openly share your merit
with all beings and if the the beings
who are aware of what you're doing
rejoice in that you know they're happy
about you doing good they're happy about
you at least having the intention of
sharing your Merit then that uplifts
them that makes them more joyous and
then they get good karma from these
uplifted mental States but it's their
own new Karma it's not that you have
shared your karma with them
and so when you get Merit for sharing
Merit you're getting Merit by just the

intention

of sharing your marriage just like the

The Good Will towards all beings Good

Will towards the beings you're sharing

your merit with that Goodwill is itself

Good Karma so you get a little bit more

good karma for that but actually there

is no transference from of Merit from

one being to another

so I think I'll just move on to the next

question here and this is from Austin

and Austin says if Nirvana is beyond the

31 planes of existence how is it

accessible to anyone in the human realm

well this is just more of the the

Paradox that I've been sort of wallowing

through

just kind of waiting trying to explain
and you can't explain it see that's the
thing I'm I explain this over and over
again and

to some degree it's just impossible it's
like trying to explain inexplicable
because it is a paradox so if Nirvana is
beyond the 31 planes of existence and it
is how is it accessible to anyone in the
human realm it's not

I mean

it's it's it's

anyone in the human realm I mean

ultimately anyone in the human realm is
an illusion

so Nirvana is Ultimate Reality

you know Nirvana is paramata saja the
highest truth it's ultimate reality and
this world we're living in is like a
dream

you know it's like the Matrix or
something

but the underlying reality of this dream
is nirvana so it's like as you detach
from whatever realm you happen to be in
for for us it's the human realm as you
detach from it you know it starts to
fade or it's it becomes less restrictive
and then you can have like
hinges or or glimmers of alternate
reality kind of shining through it's
like you become less opaque you become
more transparent you may never become

completely transparent I don't know if a
fully enlightened being would be
completely transparent spiritually but
you become more and more translucent
more light shines through you and that
light is
truth
so
that's
that's my best attempt at present of
explaining how something that is beyond
the 31 planes of existence actually in a
sense suffuses the 31 planes of
existence and any being in those 31
planes that make themselves more open
and transparent and less firmly locked

into this

essentially delusional version of

reality

I mean it has an it has an effect on

them

so to speak

so I'll just move on to the next

question this is from maitreya Buddha

and my tree of Buddha is commenting on

some statements that I made in the

previous q a

so my Trio Buddha says Buddha this is

when he says Buddha he's talking about

go to My Buddha and not himself

maitrea Buddha says Buddha protested

against animal sacrifice rituals

performed by the

proto-brahminism why did you eat pork
it is against first of the five precepts
and he's asked me why it pork because in
the previous q a I had a toothpick and I
had just eaten some pork ribs for dinner
before I did the Q a and Port get stuck
between your teeth for some reason
and so he's saying Buddha protested
against animal sacrifice rituals why did
you eat pork it's against the first of
the five precepts and as
a person pointed out in the comments
they they replied to this comment saying
that animal sacrifice rituals are
different from eating meat it's not the
same thing

I mean some animal sacrifice rituals
especially like among the ancient Greeks
and Romans that sacrifice the animal
and then they'd only like burn part of
it and then the rest would be eaten
but um

this is this really I mean if you're
eating meat nowadays as a general rule
you're not eating something that has
been sacrificed to a deity
and that pretty much went extinct in in
the west when Christianity took over
so

um I might as well point out that in
Ancient India in the Buddhist time there
were different kinds of killing that
were socially acceptable

who had War you had the execution of
criminals you had the killing of animals
for food and you had animal sacrifice
and the Buddha I mean sometimes he would
speak out against War he'd speak out
against the killing of criminals he'd
speak out against killing animals for
for food but he had enough sense
obviously to know that India just wasn't
ripe to get rid of those things I mean
you get rid of War I mean War like
barbarians are just going to move in and
and that's it you're you're non-violent
uh civilization has just come to a
violent end
with regard to killing of criminals is

just sort of the duty of the king who
who just takes takes the hit like a
stoic if he's got some wisdom because
it's his part of his job is to punish
criminals or to have them punished he's
not doing it himself

with regard to eating meat he just knew
that he could rail against it but it
would just probably make dhamma less
popular and people would just go ahead
and eat meat anyway but he knew that
animal sacrifice had pretty much run its
course in India and the times were ripe
to put an end to it and so he spoke out
vociferously against animal sacrifice
and partly one reason why he spoke out
vociferously against it is because an

animal sacrifice is supposed to be a
sacred act and in a way you're sort of
you're ruining a sacred act in a sense
by cutting an animal's throat I mean
you're putting some harmless being who
never did you any harm through mortal
Agony because you think you're going to
get Merit or something for it and in
certain ways maybe you can just like
some sort of magic or Juju generated
from the spilling of blood or something
but it's not really like refined
spirituality it's not what the Buddha
was teaching
it might be a kind of like sympathetic
magic or something but you know it

really doesn't have a place in advanced spirituality and so the Buddha really spoke out against that even more than than War and the execution of criminals and the killing of animals from meat then the Buddha himself ate meat

my tree at booty here maybe a Mahayana Buddhist and you might not want to believe that but even in the Mahayana parimoka or prati Moksha as they're called in Sanskrit

um it says write in the texts a monk is not allowed to ask for meat unless he is sick or has given has been given prior permission to ask

and that's that's one of the padimoka rules

and that's going to be in the padimoka
for Mayana Buddhism too and they just
don't care about winnia very much you
know they've got their own different
sets of rules that they've formulated in
consequent centuries and so
they don't bother to look
deep into their own scriptures of which
they've got an entire you know library
of texts you know the the Mahayana uh
what is it uh the tripitica is just huge
it's just voluminous it's I mean 40
volumes for for taravana is is just a
drop in the bucket compared with
Mahayana the Mahayana tripitica but it's
in there

eating meat is important like the really
old Estrada and it wasn't until Buddhism
became mainstream it became like a
popular mainstream like societal
religion that it changed enough Minds
that people started really taking ahimsa
seriously and started being vegetarian
but uh in the Buddhist time the monks
were Beggars you know you
um they just ate what was put in their
in their bowl within reason
um it was like the the Buddhist Judas
Iscaiot and David datta
according to tradition when he's
starting his Schism against gonama
Buddha's Sangha you know the Buddha's
own sasana

um you know one of the things he was insisting on was all monks have to be vegetarian and the Buddha said no if Uncle wants to be a vegetarian he can but it's not going to be mandatory so I mean people especially Mahayana Buddhists and just other vegetarians can insist that eating meat is bad and wrong but the Buddha ate meat and it was not against the rules you're not supposed to kill an animal

um but if it's already dead I mean the deed is done

so and then especially if you're a monk and you're just eating somebody else's leftovers you know it's just

it's not that big of a deal it's just
arupa

so anyway I'll just move on to my Trio

Buddha's next question here

and saying why do you use profanity if
it's a violation of the fourth of the
five precepts and again it's really not
um just as eating meat is not a
violation of the first precept using
profanity

um is not always a violation of the
fourth precept which is wrong speech I
guess what he's referring to would be
perusalachia which is Harsh speech
but her speech is
bad-mouthing someone to their face for
the sake of hurting their feelings or

shaming them or making them feel
uncomfortable or unhappy in some some
way so if you get up in the middle of
the night and stub your toe and exclaim
[__] that is not a violation of the the
the the fourth precept but if you say to
somebody's face [__] you then that would
be a violation of the fourth precept
because it has to be against somebody
else

I mean it was just like a tourettes kind
of a thing where something goes wrong
and you just exclaim a cuss word just
spontaneously it's not like I'm going to
exclaim a cuss word it just comes out
which happens sometimes happens to me

sometimes if I step my toe there's a
good chance I'm going to say [_]

but uh

it has to be against somebody else in
order for it to be a wrong speech you
can say whatever you want in the privacy
of your own room when you're all by
yourself you can say all kinds of things
and uh it won't be wrong speech unless
maybe if you're a monk and you're making
jokes at the expense of Buddha dhama or
sangam maybe

but me there it may be there has to be a
hearer hearing the joke in order for it
to actually qualify as as an offense
so I think I'll just move on to the next
question here this is from CEO of action

and CEO of action says
why are all of the leaders of the other
schools at the Buddhist time so
cartoonish in these stories you said the
chief disciples previous teacher Sanjaya
who was apparently the leader of the
skeptical philosophy tradition died from
vomiting blood after his disciples left
similar to Jain's leader mahavira who
apparently ripped out all of his hair
due to stress from his followers leaving
and the ajivaka leader also dying from
vomiting blood due to losing followers
yeah according to tradition David dot
also vomited blood and then the Earth
opened up and he just plunged right into

Avicii hell which is the lowest of all
the hell realms

it apparently it happened a lot in those
days

so I mean the main question here why are
all of the leaders of the other schools
of the buddhistan so cartoonish in these
stories well all of them aren't you may
notice that usually the brahmanas tend
to be treated with respect sometimes
they're portrayed as buffoons but as a
general rule

um the brahmanas you know they received
some respect yeah just the The Vedic
culture in general that was the main
culture you know you don't want to just
start bashing the mainstream too much

and

so I mean it's mainly the non-vadic
non-buddhist philosophers there's like
six of them especially

that were contemporaries of the Buddha

and they're treated like The Three

Stooges plus Laurel and Hardy plus

Gilligan I mean they're portrayed as

just absolute charlatans and buffoons

and

it's mostly political prop or religious
propaganda

I think I would like to think that

some of it is not just

which is another kind of wrong speech

where you're just bad-mouthing somebody

in order to get others not to light them
but I think there's probably some of
that involved I mean it's obviously
propaganda I don't think that mahavira
the founder of Jainism was as much of a
buffoon as he is portrayed in the texts
in the polytext I should say
um

so yeah it's like
it's it's essentially religious
propaganda and I think that that early
Buddhists got their karmuppanas when
Mahayana came along and started
ridiculing hinayana the in the inferior
vehicle
it's not the small vehicle he now
literally means like deficient

so

that's the main reason that the

non-buddhist

philosophers

who weren't

Vedic brahmanas that they're treated

like charlatans and buffoons it's just

you had

later monks some with good intentions

some may be not so good who are

um just trying to make Buddhism look as

good as possible and non-buddhism look as

bad and as foolish as possible

so

then he's got this little thing here

um

see you said the chief disciples
previous teacher Sanjaya who was
apparently the leader of the Skeptics
philosophy tradition yeah he was he was
similar to the Buddha and with the guard
too don't believe anything but
apparently

um the main difference between the
Buddha and Sanji I was Sanji I really
was a skeptic you know don't believe
anything because you can't know the
truth anyway whereas the Buddha was
saying you can know the truth but you're
not gonna you're not gonna know the
truth through beliefs you know through
ideas and intellection and so forth
you're gonna have to penetrate directly

through deep meditation and essentially
mysticism

so let's see sanjia who is apparently
the leader of the skeptic philosophy
tradition died from vomiting blood after
his disciples left similar to New York
okay

yeah okay I already kind of touched on
that so then he's got another paragraph
here which is sort of a follow-up to the
previous question here however I read in
a commentary that the chief disciples
came to their old teacher and wanted him
to join them however Sanjay said that
the wise only get few followers because
there are only very few whys but there

are many more fools in giving foolish teachings will make him more popular which made the chief disciples not want to be friends with him anymore doesn't this contradict him dying from vomiting blood well it wouldn't surprise me if there's two different traditions in different different places in the commentarial tradition or maybe I'm just remembering it wrong but obviously this is propaganda also because they're saying sanjia you know he's saying that if he teaches wisdom he'll have few followers but if he teaches foolishness he'll get more followers so he's deliberately teaching foolishness that's just more religious

propaganda

seriously

but I mean I mean doesn't this

contradict him dying from vomiting blood

I mean I doubt that any of them died

from vomiting blood you read the the

Jane text it's not going to mention

mahavira dying from vomiting blood

it's not going to mention I mean

it probably didn't happen

or maybe at least one person who was a

sort of a vocal non-budhist got some

kind of disease and coughed up blood and

then you're going there you see it's

because he was against Buddhism and then

they just liked that idea and it turned

it into an epidemic or something

so I guess I'll just move on to CEO of

action's next question here also in

India today people usually have respect

for the founders of other people's

Traditions as you can see many Hindus

paying respect to Muslim Sufi shrines

Muslims paying respect to seek holy

shrines Etc despite religious violence

being prevalent but it seems in ancient

times they have no qualms to use the

founders of other Traditions as part of

slapstick comedy stories do you think

this was a cultural shift in India or

can this be explained by something else

well

there are there are sutos where like a

follower of The Janes will come to the
Buddha wanting to debate with him or
whatever and then the Buddha will
convert him to Buddhism and then the the
Jane will Express or the the now exigane
will Express contempt for his Jain
teachers for leading him astray and the
Buddha will say no no you should have
respect for your teachers you know they
got you this far they're honest people
they're living virtuous lives you know
at least that is is respectable
so the Buddha in elsewhere in the text
does encourage people to continue
supporting their previous teachers even
if they convert to Buddhism and also

like Ashoka in his edicts

who was sort of like the Constantine of
India the Buddhist Constantine who did a
lot to convert India to Buddhism
in ancient times

um you know he was saying you know have
respect for all religions and he was
getting that from from the sutas so I
mean there is some poking fun at
non-budists which I do not think
originated from the Buddha

um I think what did originate from the
Buddha was you should have respect for
any teacher who's teaching you know
morality and honesty and at least trying
to convey some wisdom

so

so I don't think there was much of a
cultural shift

uh

the cultural shift in India I mean the
real intolerance came I think mainly
every once in a while you'd have some
King who was like a bigoted you know
like a shy bite Hindu or something who
persecuted the Buddhists that happens
sometimes

um and then of course when the Muslims
came they were just killing anyone who
wasn't a Muslim if they could if they
could chase them down

so

yeah okay I think I answered that I'll

just move on to CEO of action's next question here

in human nature people's opinions are ruled by might is right and they follow with whatever the powerful and Elites believe maybe thinking it is part of what made them a success or signaling Elite status to others one of the main reasons why Buddhism is so popular in history is because of King Ashoka being such a prominent ruler and sending missionaries everywhere at a time when that region had lots of power and influence how do we deal with contradiction that the might is Right philosophy is the exact opposite of Buddhist teaching but the source of why

it became so influential since the most powerful Empire at the time promoted it well I mean there's different ways of looking at might is right I mean you can look at it in terms of like darwinian survival of the of the fittest in that I mean there's always going to be this struggle for survival between not only species and individuals but also ideologies

so I mean it's the one that is the strongest you can say is the one that's going to win out as a general rule it's going to be strong in some way or another doesn't necessarily have to be the

wisest but it has to be the strongest in
some way or another

but uh referring to King Ashoka sort of
contradicting that I mean King Ashoka
was a good Buddhist or at least he
claimed to be his edicts claim him to be
a good Buddhist he just

he disbanded most of his armies I mean
he wasn't a military Powerhouse I mean
the mauryan empire under Ashoka I think
it was the mauryan Empire

um

I mean it was not a military power
so I mean it was it was he ruled through
Dharma
and uh

so I mean that was like spiritual power

more than military power I think

so yeah I don't think the I don't think

that

um

he really was

kind of what CEO of actions seems to be

implying here

but that's the way Buddhism has tended

to spread throughout history is it

starts from the top down you know the

the king

well like the top ministers you know the

political ministers you know the elites

the intellectuals the the rich people

they get converted first and then it

kind of trickles down to the masses

um I mean that's how Terror that's how terrible Buddhism became the national religion of Burma there was King anurata who himself was just he was a a conqueror you know he he was like the founder of the first Burmese Empire and he was just relentlessly conquering his neighbors but uh The Story Goes that a mon monk named Shin arahan came and preached to him and converted him to taravada and so King ano rata of pagan just decreed from now on Burma's gonna be terravana Buddhist so I mean it does happen and I mean just because that sort of thing happens it doesn't mean that dhamma is wrong or some such

it's just it's just what happens it's
just the way the world

so I guess I'll just move on to seal of
action and sipad zidane's next question
here I realized you didn't answer the
anti-natalism question other than for
its utilitarian use would you agree with
the Buddhist philosophical position that
it would be better off if no living
thing ever existed and that existence is
fundamentally not worth existing
well

you know I mean strictly speaking no
living thing ever does really exist
because there is no self there is no
being this is all kind of a dream you

know it's illusory in a sense

so but yeah I mean you'd say that the

first Noble Truth says if you exist

you're going to suffer and since dhamma

the purpose of dhamma is to

put an end to suffering at least for the

individual who's practicing Dhamma

then

yeah I mean it just logically implies

that you're better off without suffering

that I mean if you're going to suffer

when you exist you're better enough not

existing

so I mean it kind of reminds me of uh

The Book of Ecclesiastes in the Old

Testament where he says the most

fortunate people the poor well the

people that have never been born because
they're not going to suffer or they
haven't suffered yet anyway

so

um would I agree with the Buddhist
philosophical position that it would be
better off if no living thing ever
existed I mean

whether it be better off or not it's
just kind of irrelevant because I mean
in this samsaric universe there's living
things and there's always going to be
living things you know even after this
world dies there's going to be life
elsewhere in the universe it's just not
going to stop there's always going to be

an infinite number of suffering beings
even though they don't really exist
and it's just they have to exist you
know within a sum sorry context because
samsara is without beginning and Without
End

so you can you could say philosophically
sure yeah you'd be better off never
having been born
and uh but I mean

I don't know partly I think my situation
is

my father was kind of a macho tough guy
and he he would say stuff like a little
pain never hurt anyone
and he just accepted pain with stoicism
just stoic stoic equanimity

uh as a general rule

so I mean

it doesn't in a way it doesn't matter

maybe I'm being a total heretic now but

um I mean if you accept the suffering I

mean that kind of makes it not be

suffering anymore I mean I'm talking

about more about pain you know you

accept the pain at least it might still

be pain but it's not suffering because

the suffering is like the desire for the

pain to stop

but um

I don't know

I mean does anyone think that just a

like a blank dead void would be

preferable to the universe we live in I
guess some people would

what I mean the things are as they are
and there's I mean wishing things were
otherwise or philosophically considering
that things would be better if they were
otherwise is just sort of a waste of
intellectual effort I think

so this is how it is

and so we do our best under the
circumstances

and I don't know if I answered that
question or not but I'm moving on to the
next one this is from rui

and rui says I wonder if the ABI dama
might have come into existence as a
compilation by practitioners of insights

based on the teachings extant in the
sutras that being the case one could
imagine councils or Great Gatherings to
establish its contents and format which
at any rate seems slightly too rigid and
artificial to have been actually uttered
by the man himself any thoughts
well I've never really given a whole lot
of thought to how abhidhamma originated but
some Buddhist Scholars back before
Buddhist Scholars just started doing
like queer Buddhist studies and so forth
um there were
probably still are some Buddhist
Scholars who are of the opinion
that abhidhamma originally was called

matrices or matrixes and they were like
summaries of general principles of
dhamma

you know you've got the sutos that are
kind of all over the place
and so

teachers try to formulate this you know
this kind of compile crystallize the
sutas

condense them down into like a a
systematic system

you know it's just they tried to just
get everything into one basic organized
set of teachings and that's probably how
abhidhamma arose and because of isolation
and the fact that you know the maximum
speed of travel was how fast a monk

could walk in those days that different
different monasteries different Learning
Centers would be isolated from each
other and just through a kind of drift
you'd have teachers in one place kind of
emphasizing one thing teachers in
another place emphasizing another thing
and they just kind of gradually drift
apart and which probably resulted in
different schools of Buddhism you know
it wasn't like deliberate pernicious
schismatics or anything like that
necessarily
um and so you had different different
areas of India sort of formulating
things differently and they might have

slightly different sets of sutas also
for various reasons so

um yeah I'll be Donna obviously arose
late like

um I've mentioned before that tarovada
and sarvasti Mata uh are relatively
closely related that they probably split
apart around the time of the third
Council like during the reign of the
emperor Ashoka and their winnia is very
similar their sutas are very similar but
their abhidamas are totally different
there's not a single book the same
between their two abhidamas and so
obviously it's possible to take the same
information and interpret it differently
and that's that's what happened with the

abidamas and uh

yeah I've I've never never really had much use for abidama and most western monks don't I've I've been told probably about 70 percent of Western monks just have no use for abhidhama don't study it don't care about it don't consider it to be authentic teachings of go to My Buddha and that's one reason why Mahayana arose it was sort of a reaction against this attempt to systematically intellectualize dhamma in in just in these different you know sort of almost like a Euclid or something that you you're just never going to understand the truth through systematic

you know sets of lists and so forth

so

I'll just move on to the next question

and this is from Bill Gahan or ismet

he goes by both names apparently

and Bill Gahan or isma is somewhat of a

Buddhist scholar apparently because he's asking

sort of uh complex philosophical

questions here so those of you who are

novices try and bear with me

in the sutus bilgahan OR ismet says

there's a tendency to link Enlightenment

with the three knowledges sometimes they

mention this person attain the three

knowledges to emphasize that he attained

our hot ship however many of the

Buddha's disciples arahans didn't attain the first two of the three knowledges not in their stock format at least seemingly the first two of the three knowledges aren't really relevant to Enlightenment after all however the third knowledge is very relevant and it actually contains a separate set of three knowledges the knowledge of suffering the knowledge of taint or asawas and the knowledge of Liberation could these be the original Three knowledges and if so what would be the reason to add the other two the the two other knowledges that obviously many areas didn't attain and

do you know any other Indian religions
any other Indian religious tradition
that links Enlightenment with a set of
three knowledges

so I guess for starters I should explain
what the three knowledges are because

Bill Gahan or izmet he talks about the
three knowledges but they're not defined
so the three knowledges or the te vija
are three knowledges that the Buddha
himself according to the text

experienced when he became enlightened I
mean the first two you're not fully
enlightened yet but those are like you
know right before the third one which is
enlightenment

so the first of the three knowledges is

the knowledge of previous abodes or
existences or in other words it's
remembering your past lives
so you remember your past lives you see
how you arose in this area and you did
such and such and you lived such and
such life and then you died and passed
away from there to this other life and
you you know it's just you just remember
these past lives then the second
knowledge is the knowledge of the
passing away and reappearances of beings
according to their karma which could be
described as just deepaku or the Divine
eyes like a a deep Clairvoyance where
you're not just seeing the surfaces of

things but you're penetrating into
different beings and seeing their karma
and how their karma has led them you
know from place to place until they've
gotten where they are
so the first of the three knowledges
remembering your past lives second of
the three knowledges is observing you
know how other beings are faring
according to their karma probably
yourself included and then the third
knowledge is the knowledge of the
destruction of the osawas or the
encumbering influences as I def as I
render them bikubody prefers taints
other other uh translators call them
cankers

uh I think niana tiloka originally in
his dictionary called him bias biases
but Asawa

um according to anjan tanisro is the
term borrowed from the James where the
James believed that you've got a soul or
a Jiva and that bad karma or just karma
in general it's like a sticky substance
that comes that flows onto your your
Jiva and weighs it down and so what
James are trying to do is get rid of all
of their karma get rid of all of their
asawas this encumbering influence Karma
so that their their Jiva can float up
into into this Heaven of immortality but
um

so it means something flowing towards
you also literally means flowing towards
one

so I mean it's just kind of an
encumbering influence I mean literally
influence

would be a literal translation of Asawa
um

so let's see I've defined it I guess

so he says that when you become
enlightened the the knowledge of the the
the destruction of the asawas that's
that's when you become enlightened when
your assaults are destroyed you're
enlightened so that's another definition
of enlightenment it's the end of
encumbering influences

um but in the text when it's describing this third knowledge it's first you're aware of the Four Noble Truths with the emphasis on dukkha you know the the truth of dukkha the truth of the arising of dukkha the truth of the cessation of dukkha the truth of the path leading to the cessation of dukkha and then the second knowledge is with regard to the osawas whereas you just replace duka with Asawa means the truth of the asawas the truth of the origin of the osawas the truth of the cessation of the asawas and the truth of the path leading to the station of ocelots and then the third of these knowledges is just that's it it's

just Enlightenment you know the the tab
what had to be done is done the burden
is laid down you know there's no more of
this or that existence
and it's just a formula
so

let's see Bill Gahan or ismet is asking
if that could be the original Three
knowledges and that the remembrance of
past lives and the seeing of others
faring according to their karma could be
like a later three knowledges so you
have like these two competing three
knowledges and then they have to like
fit them together somehow to
um and it happens a lot like the Buddha
has two different sets of first words

after he becomes enlightened now one is
in one suit another is another Sutra
just because

um you know they they arose in two
different

areas of India maybe you know this
mythologists or whatever at least one of
them is going to be mythological
probably

and um

then you get the commentators trying to
reconcile everything they're trying to
say no there's no you know there's no
contradictions at all so they say well
the first one set of first words the
Buddha thought them and the second set

of first words he spoke aloud and so he thought one set of first words and then he spoke to the other set of first words and it might be something similar with the three knowledges how the third of the three knowledges itself is in three parts so that might have been the original Three knowledges and then they just when they were emphasizing just the flashiness of psychic powers they might have added

um you know the other set of three knowledges which includes remembering past lives and and like the Clairvoyance and so forth but um it's hard to say you can't really say for sure all you can do is uh

indulge in conjecture at this point

but with regard to the very last

question here of the last part of this

question

do you know any other Indian religious

tradition that links Enlightenment with

a set of three knowledges well

um the whole idea of three knowledge is

itself a repurposing of an earlier

tradition and that is The Vedic

tradition because

for a Vedic brahmana they also had the

three knowledges that was the knowledge

of the three Vedas

knowledge of the rig Veda the the Sama

Veda and the yajavada those were the

three Vedas in the Buddhist time the
atarva Veda wasn't considered canonical
yet apparently so in the Buddhist time
there were three Vedas and that was the
three knowledge is the knowledge of the
three Vedas and so the Buddhists the
Buddhists repurposed certain terms like
I was just talking about Oswald so that
was repurposed from Jane philosophy
reinterpreted along Buddhist lines the
three knowledge is also reinterpreted
along Buddhist lines

um the three poisons agreed hate and
delusion sometimes in older texts are
called The Three Fires which also is
repurposing of the three sacrificial
fires of the brahmanas so that happened

a lot like even the word Brahman itself
got repurposed by the Buddhists into an
enlightened being or a holy man not not
because of the way he was born like the
cast he was born into because of his his
conduct and the purity of his mind and
so forth

so I think I answered that one so I
think I'll just move on to the next one
here

also from Bill Gahan or ismet
and he says

there are two separate stock definitions
of Right View imagine

117 tries to reconcile this by saying
one is mundane and the other is superior

and it tries to replicate it for the other path factors but they don't make much sense the sutta is categorized as a late composition in the book you recommended which is studies and origins of Buddhism by GC Pandey another problem is Right View would be the beginning of the path but if we take Right View as the knowledge of suffering it'd be one of the three knowledges and that would be at the end of the path so how should we make sense of this

well there's a few issues here uh one is that they're according to Bill Gahan or Ismet there are two separate stock definitions of Right View and again it's sort of like the Buddha's two

different sets of first words or the two
different sets of three knowledges where
it may be in one part of India you had a
monastery that came up with one stock
definition another part of India was you
know following a slightly different
tradition within the same school came up
with a somewhat different
um stock definition and then they both
became accepted by large numbers of
monks and then finally you have a
convocation or something where the two
are sort of budding against each other
and then they have to be reconciled
and and that happened in apparently in
the evolution of Buddhist philosophy

and if they were irreconcilable then
you'd have a schism

so

yeah I mean you can say I mean you can
say that one definition of Right View is
mundane and the other is

Superior I mean that's it's getting into
the second part of this question here

um

it's it's like right view for a beginner
is not going to be the same as Right

View for someone who's a veteran of
practice and that's not going to be the
same as the right view of an enlightened

being I mean the right view for an
enlightened being is just going to be
clear seeing of reality without any kind

of belief at all now you want to be able to write it down so it's like when you're a beginner Your Right View is going to be suitable for a beginner and it's right view because it's leading you in the right direction but as you continue on the path then your right view is going to evolve develop and become more subtle it's gonna you know it's going to be wiser you know it's going to be less Elementary and become more advanced so I mean right view isn't just one formula that is correct that you put in words and sentences that I mean right view I mean it's going to vary slightly at

least from one person to another I mean
there's going to be certain fundamentals
um just like an acknowledgment of the
four noble truths for example but um
still what's leading one person in the
right direction might not be what's
leading another person in the right
direction

so I think there's there's another part
of this question here uh
yeah knowledge of suffering I mean just
knowing the four noble truths just sort
of memorizing the formulas I mean that's
like an elementary knowledge of
suffering but you're never going to
fully understand dukkha and the the
rising of duka and the cessation of

dukkha until I mean you've mastered it
so there's just going to be like an
evolution of Right View as your practice
evolves and as your wisdom develops
so don't take formulas too seriously for
various reasons one is I mean the
highest truth you're not going to be
able to put in words anyway the name
that can be named is not the Eternal
name

but uh also I mean it's just stock
formulas are largely just an aid in
memorization because for 500 years
according to tradition the polytopitica
was not written down there might be
little inscriptions but the entire thing

was not written down and so it had to be
memorized by heart and stock passages

are easy to memorize

so I'll just move on to the next

question here also from Bill Gahan or

ismet

he says it seems to me during the

development of new ideas they repurposed

the material they already had therefore

when I see a simile or a stock phrase

that seems out of place I'm trying to

find out what it originally represented

one of my suspicions is with regard to

mind made body a lot of times it's not

even included in the list of psychic

powers but in longer sutras where there

are lists upon lists it's always

mentioned which makes me think it's a late development what's puzzling to me is the simile associated with it there are three similes with the same principle a sword in its sheath and they aren't very relevant to the subject I'm kind of convinced that these similes belong somewhere else they could either be describing different study batanas such as body within the body or the three sankharas I'm curious of your opinion on this one and whether you have any theories about the original purpose of the other weird stock phrases in the sutos well like I was saying that one of the main purposes of stock phrases is

just ease of memorization

and once you get like an orthodox

explanation that everyone can agree on

like with regard to the four genres or

whatever then it's just safe to use that

stop explanation because you know it's

not going to be objected to

um I really don't think that the Buddha

when you describe the four genres use

the exact same stock formula every time

which is the way you find it in the

texts

but there are cases like if especially

if you read the padimoka rules each rule

has an origin story you know it's

telling the the details of what happened

that caused the Buddha to make the rule

and sometimes the origin stories just don't line up with the rule itself in fact a few of them just contradict the rule

so

so it's it's hard to say exactly how this happened you know more than 2 000 years ago in the Ganges Valley you know it's just very difficult to say you can you can have all kinds of conjectures plausible hypotheses and so forth but to actually say how it happened is is impossible pretty much Unless somehow you're omniscient or something and even then you wouldn't be able to prove it to anybody else

so but on the on the bright side it's
unnecessary to really know any of this
stuff it's just like I say it's
Superfluous conjecture you know it's not
going to help you get enlightened you
can you can become fully enlightened
assuming that full Enlightenment exists
when the song context and uh not know
any of this stuff
so it's just sort of intellectual
you know it's intellectual masturbation
in a sense
oh I'm not trying to uh disparage anyone
from trying to understand Buddhism
because I've done a lot of it myself
so
yeah it's just

yeah I think I kind of answered it it
answered it about as well as I'm
inclined to answer it so I think I'll
just move on to beard
yeah Bill Gahan or ismitz next question
here

naroda is translated as cessation and
people take the implications that come
with that translation very literally
I've seen people describing their
blackouts during meditation as cessation
however I'm pretty sure that it has a
more subtle meaning in nasutas it's
usually bundled up with Detachment
dispassion disenchantment and I'm
inclined to believe that its original

meaning is closer to those what is your
opinion on the original meaning of
naroda well yeah somebody describing
their blackouts during meditation as
cessation is uh they're not using an
orthodox sense I mean nirona got turned
into a kind of very high meditative
State higher than fourth of genre it's
only access accessible to the most
highly Advanced Saints so probably the
people

um at The Meditation Retreat or whatever
weren't experiencing that but I mean
originally nerota I mean it does mean
cessation and I guess one of the
earliest

um philosophical applications of the

ordinary Roto would be in the four noble truths the third Noble Truth is *neroda* *Sacha* the the Noble Truth of cessation which is dealing with two different kinds of cessations the cessation of suffering is caused by the cessation of craving

so it just means cessation and uh it's not I mean originally it certainly wasn't with regard to the cessation of perception and feeling which is this extremely highly Advanced meditative state that I don't think the Buddha originally taught and I mean it's it's like suspended animation I mean it's just nothing and it's like your your

mind just shuts down temporarily

or at least that's that's the way it's

described

so

so yeah so I think that that would be my

answer I'll just move on to the next

question here this is from White Ash

Piper

and white ash Piper says have you read

Ramana maharshi or actually he has it

Ramana Maharishi

I only just begun to become familiar

with his point of view a cave dweller to

his use of Silence I find attracted to

whereas sad Guru seems to know

everything about and on anything

so um yeah I read about Ramana maharshi

I I found a biography of him at a used bookstore in Mandalay when I was a monk long ago and I read it and I still have it on the bookcase back there it's really a nice book and um I mean most of what you read of Ramana maharshi isn't written by Ramana maharshi because he didn't write very much almost all that he wrote that I'm aware of were like devotional verses to this sacred Hill called arunachala so most of what you read of Ramana maharshi's teachings is about Ramana harshis like people who listened to him and were like repeating you know they're writing down what he was saying that

kind of thing

but his his case is very very

interesting case to me it's fascinating

um

it's it's sort of not Orthodox Buddhist

I mean just the very idea that he'd be

an enlightened being and not be a

Buddhist itself not Orthodox Buddhism

but uh yeah his cases are really

fascinating case and it's it's an

interesting case history even if you're

not a shy bite Hindu but Ramana maharshi

um

he started off this was like late 1800s

early 1900s back when India was a

British colony

and he was like upper middle class

Brahman you know raised in like this
sort of a secular
family and they weren't very religious
they'd go to Temples like only on
Festival days when everyone went to the
temple it was just what he did it was
the social thing to do
and uh apparently he was going to like a
a British High School like British High
School set up in India and he was going
to go to college after that and become
like an engineer or something and he
didn't meditate that kind of a thing but
one day he was doing his homework he's a
high school student alone in the house
doing his homework and he started having

like a panic attack he felt like he was gonna die just it just boom it just hit him and so he thought well if I'm going to die I should be ready I should prepare myself so he lay down on his back on the floor because he figured when he was dead he wouldn't be moving so he's getting ready and then he thought well if I'm dead I'm not going to be thinking anymore either so he stopped thinking and then just click that was it he became enlightened according to the according to the story and in later years he said that the only real yogic practice the only real spiritual practice he did in his life was that few moments just lying on the

floor not moving and not thinking
and it was just this click it was sort
of like what Eckhart Tolle says happened
to him where you know he didn't meditate
beforehand he was just right for it and
then some event came along that just
slammed him into enlightenment and
um as I said I mean he didn't really
know about spirituality but he was just
spontaneously going into these
meditative like deep absorption States
contemplative States and he didn't want
to do his homework anymore I mean he's
this high school student who's
enlightened now apparently sort of like
uh if you've ever read the JD Salinger

story Teddy I mean it's kind of this
kind of a thing where you've got this
enlightened being just surrounded by
complete samsara just everyone else is
just this clueless Normie
and so he's not doing his homework he's
just sitting there like in this state of
meditative Bliss and his elder brother
who was a college student he just says
oh you're useless you ought to just run
off and become a saudu and ramen
amaharshi he knew his brother was just
being sarcastic but he also knew that he
was right and so he he ran away from
home I think he had some earrings or
something he sold and got a train ticket
the only place he knew of is a holy

place was this hill arunachala that wasn't far away that he lived in Southern India and uh so he went to arunachala and he had his hair shaved and he threw away his sacred thread that the brahmanas are supposed to wear all the time and he just sat down in this Temple the first temple he came to and just went into this deep meditative State and uh the caretaker of the temple some priest I assume would kind of watch over him and drive off the the school kids that would be throwing rocks at him and this sort of thing and uh he was doing what he could to protect this strange kid you know sitting in

absorption at the temple the ants were biting and so forth they were doing what they could to keep him from just being eaten alive by insects because he wouldn't care I mean he's just sitting there in this it's just zoned out essentially

sometimes they'd have to put food into his mouth to get him to eat anything and uh after he finally you know came out of his his deep meditative State I mean or at least came out of enough that he was able to like you know function to some degree he was mute I mean he could not he did not talk for I think it was at least a year and it was because he was just slammed

into this state of Enlightenment or whatever he was slammed into this expanded Consciousness he could not integrate that with samsara you know it was like he didn't know how to function in the world anymore because he was in this different world practically but gradually as the years went by he started being able to talk and function normally and so forth and um he apparently was the real deal I've never heard any hint of Scandal about him I mean some people can joke about how his best friend was a cow you know he had this cow that he was very fond of

um but uh yeah he was just a very
saintly kind of saint
and he eventually died of of um cancer
in his arm and he didn't care I mean his
disciples are all begging him to cure
himself because he had evidently cured
others but uh he just said I mean
they're saying don't leave us and he's
just saying where would I possibly go
and he wouldn't refer to himself though
he wouldn't say I he wouldn't say me he
would just say bhagawan which is God I
mean it's it's not like I mean some
people could say oh there you go he's
like this narcissist or he's a charlatan
just trying to pass himself off as a God
but I mean he was just in that state

where I mean his ego was just gone if he
had actually had to refer to himself
specifically he would just point and
just say this

but and he was he was a Hindu and uh
like I said almost the only thing he
ever wrote as a as a sage was just these
devotional verses to a hill

but uh he was a very saintly person
and that's about all I know about him is
just from what I read in the book and
just a few other things I've picked up
here and there

so I'll just move on to the next
question here this is from Conrad
and Conrad says I have a hard time

believing that this stream of
Consciousness can take rebirth into an
animal an insect Etc I do believe that
in the past we went through that phase
but this leads to the idea of evolution
how does that fit into the Buddhist
context I can actually understand the
fall of a human being into some real bad
states of being like a hell being a
Hungry Ghost or someone who is born with
serious handicaps Etc but the idea of
being a mouse for example and by
accumulating Merit it would eventually
be born as a human this sounds absurd
childish
and I have to agree that it's it's
difficult for me to accept that you've

got a fully developed human being you
know all this complexity in their mind
that due to some karmic mistake they
made they're going to get reborn as a
mosquito or a goldfish or something I
don't see how all that karmic complexity
could

be compacted down into the tiny little
Mind of a fish

yeah it's hard for me to accept and it
could be it was like an Indian cultural
thing that that just got absorbed by
Buddhism from you know like the oldest
upanishads or something

um

but also I mean if you read the jyotica

stories you'll see that the Indians
actually seem to believe that some
animals at least had more or less human
intelligence
that you've got all these talking
animals you know just they're just
dealing at the human level they even
have proper poly grammar when they speak
and so forth so it could have been to
some degree the idea that I mean
mentally animals aren't all that
different from from humans but
personally I do think it is sort of a
cultural thing the only way I could I
could plausibly
imagine
um like my karma becoming a mosquito or

something would be like if like uh the
for the multi-dimensional entity Seth in
the Seth speaks books the Seth material
he says that your karma can like split
that some of your karma can split off so
it may be a little spark of your karma
splits off

and just starts off its own uh
evolutionary line of
rebirth

starting off as a fly or a mosquito or
something I mean that's possible

but yeah I have to agree with Conrad
here that uh it seems very unlikely to
me that all the complexity of a human
being could be reborn into a bug

or a pollywog or something

but I mean

theoretically you could have I remember

one time in Burma seeing this this

person he was like a a teenage kid and

he was so severely mentally [_]

that I mean I don't think anyone was

there it was you know his eyes were open

he was breathing

um you kind of have to be held up if

he's gonna sit up

but

um you know the dog is crying outside

but I mean there's nobody there

and I mean somebody like that where

there's hardly any mind there at all

then that could be maybe reborn as a a

fish or a frog or a bug or something but
yeah I think I'll just move on to the
next question here

this is from bodhisatta 969

and bodhisatta 969 says the question was
asked in a similar way in the last q a
do you also believe in reincarnation
which actually belongs to the essence of
Buddhism

oh which which actually belongs to the
essence of Buddhism or is it more like
me that you want to believe is there a
meditative experience when you saw
previous lives

well I don't like remember any previous
lives I've been my father believed I was

a Reincarnation of his father which makes me my own grandpa but I don't remember that and this like the personality traits that we share could be largely genetic

so

um do I believe in reincarnation I assume that it's true but I realize I have no way of proving the case one way or the other

that it is a working hypothesis and I mean I do have like these intuitive sort of

feelings intuitions about certain past lives where I just have like this deep appreciation or resonance with certain periods in history certain parts of the

world like medieval Japan or like
southern Italy during like the late
Roman Republic or
let's see fourth 14th century England
and I mean there's just certain things
that I mean

I mean I've got no interest hardly at
all in like ancient Egypt or ancient
mesoameric or you know prehistoric
mesoamerica anything like that
so

um I mean just a second
hey be quiet stop doing that
the dog's being needy because my
sweetheart is downstairs
okay so reincarnation I assume that it's

true I can't prove that it's true it's a convenient working hypothesis and it does help to explain why I have certain traits that can't easily be explained through genetics and past experience so

yeah I mean there's there's no proof you can't really prove anything I mean maybe something entirely contained within your own mind you can prove you can prove a theorem of Euclid in your mind so long as it's all self-contained you know you've got all the premises and everything there in your mind you can prove something like that but anything with regard to the external world it can't be proven

it can be sort of

I mean you can show enough evidence that

it's persuasive

but you can't absolutely prove it to be

true

so I'll just uh move on to the next

question here

this is from hey it's Tig

it's TIG says have you seen Oliver

Stones The Doors if so what is your

opinion on it have the doors made any

significant Impressions on you

throughout your life also what is your

opinion on Jim Morrison

well first of all I haven't seen Oliver

Stone's movie The Doors I have seen a

few of Stone's movies like his his movie
about Nixon for example which was
interesting

so I I don't have really an opinion of
it I haven't seen it don't have an
opinion of it so then we get to the next
question here have the doors made any
significant Impressions on you
throughout your life no I mean I like
some of their music but
um I've

I don't like keyboards in rock and roll
very much and the doors had an organ I'm
pretty sure I mean keyboards wreck rock
and roll bands it's like

Van Halen started using keyboards went
downhill Led Zeppelin John Paul Jones

started preferring keyboards to playing
bass

downhill there are very few bands that
really get away with using keyboards
something kind of hippity hoppity like
B-52s or something but like serious rock
and roll you're better off without the
keyboards so just the fact that they had
keyboards kind of to some degree subtly
poisoned my mind against the doors
uh with regard to my opinion of Jim
Morrison I have almost no knowledge of
Jim Morrison other than one time a long
time ago I was watching some talk show
on TV and they were interviewing this
she was like a professional groupie

you know she she had slept with lots of
rock stars and she was comparing them
and she said the studliest Chad rock
star that she ever slept with was Jim
Morrison

so I think I'll just move on to the next
question here

this is from Titus d ascentis

and Titus the ascentis says why did the
Buddhist coroner get fired he kept
listing birth as the cause of death on
every certificate but I'm bumped

last time concerning Buddhist jokes I
didn't mean anything respectful I forgot
to include the greeting header oh it's a
comment here last time concerning
Buddhist jokes I didn't mean anything

disrespectful I forgot to include the
greeting header that's that's fine I
edit off the greeting header usually
anyway when I read the question anyway
there are some good Buddhist jokes out
there intelligent and very insightful or
simply funny for Fun's sake while
referring to a Buddhist notion like the
one about a Buddhist and a hot dog
vendor I think that's probably the one
where you're saying make me one with
everything because it's usually a
Buddhist Pizza joke rather than a hot
dog joke
somebody some TV interviewer asked the
Dalai Lama that riddle about making me

one with everything and he the Dalai

Lama didn't get it at all

but I digress

so perhaps my question should have been

simply does humor belong in Buddhism but

then answer to that would be an obvious

yes it does you yourself express some

humor in these q and A's which is very

appreciated what is a teacher without a

sense of humor right

well actually

that's not this isn't even your question

but yeah it is true that that the joke

about the Buddhist Corner who got fired

from his job because as cause of death

he always put birth

yeah that is a good joke if I had

remembered that last time I might have
said that was my favorite Buddhist joke
I remember hearing that as a junior Monk
and it's not really objectionable it's
not like ridiculing anything
other than a fictional coroner I guess
so yeah that's that's harmless it's not
it's not like ridiculing Buddhism or
dama or the Buddha or anything so yeah
I'll give that one a pass definitely
so I'll just move on to Titus
theosynthesis first actual question
speaking of humor in Buddhism are you
familiar with any of the works of Brad
Warner and then he's got a list here
hardcore Zen Don't Be a Jerk sit down

and shut up

sex is sin and Zen hardcore Zen strikes

again it it came from Beyond Zen

um no I've never read anything by Brad

Warner I'm not exactly sure who Brad

Warner is

I did I mean possibly my favorite joke

title to a meditation book is don't just

do something sit there

so if Brad Warner wrote that that would

be my main uh influence from Brad Warner

um you got to be careful with too much

of joking though I remember once though

I think it was one of the only times I

ever went to Spirit Rock we just showed

up there and uh Dharma talk was was

going to happen so I I sat through the

dhama talk and it was mainly just this a female comedian with I mean she she told more jokes and any kind of actual Dharma it was just sort of an entertainment show with just a Teensy amount of sort of secular

uh eclectic Dharma mixed in with it and I mean that sort of thing I mean people start confusing the humor with with the Dharma

and uh yeah I think there is sort of uh too much is uh is not necessarily a good thing in the case of joking in Buddhism but I mean there is there is a certain amount of humor in Buddhism it's very dry humor in the text and it doesn't

happen very often but it is in there

and that's good I mean

humor is good

so I'll just uh I mean I used to say

that like uh like the Bible says you

know the beginning of wisdom is the fear

of God

the fear of God is the beginning of

wisdom that's in the Bible somewhere

right but I think a sense of humor may

be the beginning of wisdom

anyway I'll just move on to uh Titus

theosynthesis next question here

which is as follows

one of the tasks in meditation practices

is the suspension of internal dialogue

many people during various sitting still

meditations struggle greatly or utterly fail at this including myself passivity actually intensified internal dialogue one thing I realized however is that I had many episodes of internal dialogue suspension while being in an action or an event such as fishing painting playing an instrument

Etc I remember thinking why people insist on sitting still doing nothing meditation practices is beyond me but then although more logical to me this is strictly personal I guess if practice in a way that doesn't suit them many may never get a hold of it and it seems there are active meditation forms out

there various schools teachings various
schools or teachings persisting with one
traditional meditation form nowadays
seem rather outdated maybe even not very
enlightened shouldn't teachers task be
to help the student realize his greatest
potential wouldn't this today in the
Golden Age of information include giving
him a choice between still or active
meditative forms or am I missing
something crucial and there is actually
something to tradition or even the
struggle itself any thoughts
okay well

for a Buddhist monk if you read the text
a Buddhist monk is supposed to be
meditating all the time like in the the

stock description of Sati sampajanya or mindfulness and clear comprehension as it's often rendered you know it's like anything he does he is mindful of it's like it's like a meditation if he's gonna turn his head you know there's the intention to turn your head and then he mindfully turns his head he's going to reach out he mindfully reaches out if he's going to retract his arm he mindfully retracts his arm if he's gonna walk he walks mindfully if he's gonna sit down he sits down lion sleep he's going to lie down he lies down mindfully and um so sitting meditation was just a refinement of this it's like you're

taking already meditate meditative
mental state and you're refining it
because you've got less commotion going
on and so you can get to a a more
peaceful silent kind of mental state
because even if you're not thinking out
loud if you're doing things you know
there's all these perceptions bombarding
you

all this stuff going on and even the
perceiving of that is a kind of mental
activity that when you're sitting

Crossing it with your eyes closed is

I mean it's not there it's not happening
nearly as much

so in addition to that there's also a
walking meditation which is endorsed in

in the ancient texts and in fact a lot of meditation Traditions like mahasi meditation tradition the tradition is you walk for an hour then you sit for an hour and then you walk for an hour then you sit for an hour but um I think it was Eckhart Tolle who talks about some people get addicted to Danger sports like motorcycle riding or rock climbing because it forces you to be in this expanded extremely alert mindful mental state because if you [_] up for just a split second you're dead and so people practice these because it like expands their mind is sort of like expanded State of Consciousness it feels

good you know it's like a high but it's
a good high it's not like like you're
like on narcotics or something but the
problem is that they don't know how to
attain those expanded states of clarity
and mindfulness when they're not doing
the dangerous sport like going 160 miles
an hour on a motorcycle

so the trick is I mean you try to be as
meditative as you can I mean especially
for a like a a professional practitioner
like a monk you know you're supposed to
be mindful you know no matter what
you're doing and then you take what
momentum you've got going from that when
you sit down and then then you can get
into these really quiet peaceful states

of clarity that are much more difficult
when you're walking around making noise
although there are stories in the in the
tradition of monks becoming enlightened
when they're when they're not sitting
across like like uh Ananda according to
tradition

the night before the first Council he's
the only monk who's going to attend the
First Council who isn't enlightened
because he was so busy not being the
the computer just told me I haven't
plugged it in again I plugged it in
yesterday

it's not even funny

okay

this happens almost every time you think
I would have learned by now but I did I
did do it yesterday and then it didn't
record

so

so anyway Ananda he's doing walking
meditation trying to get himself
enlightened because he was so busy being
the Buddha's attendant that you know he
didn't have time to practice intensively
enough or something so he's doing
walking meditation and finally it's just
not happening he's not getting
enlightened so he decides he's just
gonna lie down and get some sleep and as
he's mindfully sitting down on the bed
and starting to lean over right when

he's intermediate between sitting and
lying down he becomes enlightened
or there's another story I think it's in
the commentaries of a monk who is doing
meditation on Bones so one of the 32
parts of the body that is bones and um
there's a woman who is like flirting
with him or something he's just walking
along in this
woman of not a very good moral uh fiber
comes up and she's sort of flirting with
him and laughing and maybe teasing him
and he looks at her teeth and sees them
as bones and it's right there he becomes
enlightened all these sort of
contemplating the the teeth bones of

this laughing woman so I mean it can
happen

I mean in Zen there's lots of cases like
that like the monk who's he's sweeping
the he's sweeping the area around the
temple and he accidentally sweeps this
rock against a bamboo pole like in some
bamboos growing there and it makes this
sound like talk and there's that top
just all of a sudden it happens

so

yeah

um I guess I answered the question in a
very roundabout way so I'll just move on
to uh

let's see Titus theosynthesis next
question

what is consciousness without an eye
well Consciousness without an eye
um whenever you're not like being
self-referential that would be
Consciousness without an eye like most
animals

they they don't they're not self-aware
um you know they're they're not aware of
what's going on inside them so much as
just outside and some people might be
like that too

um

it's like Consciousness with an eye you
have to have like a recursive mental
state where your mental states are are
like aware of other mental States you

know you have to like be turning the
mind in on itself in order for there to
be a concept of of self
and most conscious beings just don't
have it apparently
so what is consciousness I mean what
Consciousness ultimately is
I mean it's it's sort of like I almost
like an undefined term like science
doesn't really know what it is I mean
you can say it's always like awareness
or something and then you say well
what's that and you know it's like
eventually you get them backed up
against a wall because they can't really
explain it it's sort of like energy to a
physicist some people some physicists

will say energy is just the you know the capacity to do work or something like that but a lot of physicists especially the more contemplated ones will say that that like energy is just an undefined term they can't really say what it is and I think that Consciousness and energy are essentially the same thing but what Consciousness Consciousness with I don't know all you have to do is just not be self-referential and it happens to everybody and there you go you know what it is to run your own experience and not me explaining it to you so we'll just move on to Titus

deosynthesis next question here

which is other than writing and teaching

have you ever tried yourself in other

art forms music painting sculpting would

you show a painting or drawing if you

have any

well

um

I did play some music but it was I was

like in high school a junior high school

band I played uh trumpet at first but I

had bad embouchure my like my lips are

too fat and my I got like an overbite I

couldn't hit the high notes easy so they

switched me over to treble clef baritone

horn which is sort of like a small tuba

and

it's uh I mean I don't know if you could
call it music maybe you can call it
music but I mean when you're playing
treble clef baritone horn you're doing
the bass line so that any song that you
play it always sounds the same it's like
Etc et cetera until you get to the end
of the song

so I mean that wasn't very challenging
um with regard to sculpting and maybe a
little bit I was good with clay in art
class regard to painting I never really
learned good painting technique
my paintings are always turned out muddy
or something but drawing I'm good at
drawing but I can't really show you any

drawings that I've drawn because I'm pretty sure the only drawings that I have

um are the best drawings that I have were drawn years ago and it's it's a series of nudes it's like undraped female forms and it wasn't drawn from live models but uh still

and I could probably get a strike for showing them because uh they're naked so I think I'll just move on next

question here this is from the Spanish Inquisition

and the Spanish Inquisition says is alcoholism rare in Buddhist countries and I've gotten the wrong font here and

it's bugging me so I'm just gonna switch
it

okay

so the Spanish Inquisition says is
alcoholism rare in Buddhist countries
and yeah it's I mean I can't really
speak for all Buddhist countries the
only Buddhist country I've spent a
significant amount of time in is Burma
and I can say that in rural Burma
I mean you might you're going to have
the village drunk you're gonna have some
guys that are rascally and they'll drink
something but it's um it's much less
prevalent than it is in the west and way
less prevalent than it is in like

Eastern Europe

um it does happen though I mean the rich people who are aping Western culture in the in like Rangoon yeah they'll drink and it's like the standard Burmese movie um you know it's it's like different versions of the same movie where is the standard Burmese movie I watch them so you don't have to you've got Boy Meets Girl girl is rich boy is not rich girls Rich family won't let her marry boy so what happens is sometimes as like the Elder Brothers of the girl or just some hired goons will beat up the boy he'll go off and drink himself half to death on Johnny Walker Red Label whereas the girl cries for a few days and then

marries the guy that she's told to Mary
and that's the end essentially

so I mean you've

why anyone want to drink Johnny Walker

Red Label I have no idea

but for some reason in the Burmese

movies that's what they drink

but out in the village where it's more
traditional

you may have the village trunk I

remember I used to have this dog named

Merv Griffin

and he was a good dog and he was

formerly the dog of this Village guy who

was ordained temporarily as a novice

just to be the caretaker of the

monastery where I subsequently lived he had already gone by the time I started living there

but uh he dropped out and he was an alcoholic apparently and The Story Goes that on one day he drank five bottles of rum because you can get rum in Burma too um and then around the time of him finishing the fifth bottle or getting close to finishing the fifth ball they must have been pints I don't know if anyone could drink five fifths in one day he just fell off of his Ox cart and died and was just

so I inherited his dog so I mean that kind of thing does happen but it's like it's a low social status kind of a thing

to do

um

it's sort of like this like a person who
is an alcoholic in Burma would have
about the same stigma on them as like a
heroin addict nowadays assuming that
there are still heroin addicts now that
they've got drugs that are way more
powerful than heroin

but

um yeah it does happen but it's rare
and I could have just said it does
happen but it's rare and moved on the
next question but I'm always telling
stories and stuff
so this is the last question this wasn't

the last question yesterday when I did
the Q a because he asked this one uh
this morning

so he got onto the list

and this is from Judge Caligula Bushman
and judge Caligula Bushman says what's
your opinion on the talking point among
Hindu nationalists that Buddhism is just
a Hindu sect most of their arguments are
obviously self-serving propaganda but
they also claim that there is textual
evidence that the Buddha did believe in
and propagated the Hindu notion of the
Soul

notable hindujia people I'm referring to
have videos about this on YouTube

Conrad else

Etc

well

whether the Buddha did believe in a like
an Atman

uh it's it's unlikely but I mean there
could be evidence put forth that would
persuade at least those who are willing
to be persuaded who want to be persuaded
but it seems to me that in order to
really be a Hindu sect you have to
accept The Vedas as authoritative which
Buddhism clearly does not

so I mean it's sort of like a political
thing to say that Buddhism is a sect of
Hinduism like I was told that in Nepal
um the Buddhists were clamoring to have

Buddhism taught in the schools because
Hinduism is taught in the schools and
the government just said well Buddhism
is taught in the schools because
Hinduism is taught in schools and
Buddhism is a kind of Hinduism but um
and I mean the Buddha is considered to
be the sixth Avatar of Vishnu
so Hindus do believe
that godama Buddha was an avatar of
Vishnu but he was like the the deceiver
or something he was like trying to
purify Hinduism by Leading fools away
into Buddhism to get them away from
Hinduism or something
uh but still I think really what
the decisive argument to me is Buddhism

does not consider The Vedas to be
authoritative and therefore it is not
effective Hinduism because I'm pretty
sure in order to be a Hindu you have to
consider The Vedas at least the first
three to be authoritative

and that's it I'm that's that's the end
of the thing and in this q a is like 10
minutes shorter than the one I did
yesterday even though it has one extra
question because

um there are a few digressions that I
made yesterday that I didn't make this
time

but uh it's good enough I suppose you'll
have to listen to my rant about

Jehovah's Witnesses some other time

that's what I did that yesterday it took
several minutes

so

um if you have any questions as usual

feel free to leave them in the uh

comments below if you have access to the

Discord server you can leave them there

you have access to the Subscribe Star

channel you can leave them there

um feel free to like And subscribe if

you haven't already feel free to order

my books and it helps to leave a review

and uh be happy

hello and welcome to episode 59 of
question and answer I am your host Ponyo
bossa and this in the USA is Labor Day
weekend which means that as a laborer I
get a three-day weekend this weekend as
opposed to back before I was a laborer
when I would have essentially a seven
day weekend every week
and we've got sort of a moderate amount
of questions which could easily multiply
until they're completely out of hand if
I were to postpone this for another week
so let's just do a nice moderate middle
path kind of uh q a today and I've got
my sweet tea
and I'm about as ready as I'll ever be

although I have noticed during the summer time here in South Carolina I've been like on Saturdays I still have kind of a hangover from work just from like working hard in hot weather it takes at least a day of just lying around on the couch being a slug in order to replenish my electrolytes and metabolites and other things that end in ending light in light so

um I'll just start answering questions that's what I'm going to do and the first question is from cricket and frog song

who changes his name every few weeks and by the time I answer the question might be somebody else

but we'll just go with this this for now
and cricket and frog song says what is
the Buddhist equivalent of God has other
plans for me

God has other plans for me

and this came from a brief discussion on
the Discord server about

uh they're talking about how hard it is
to attain Jonna

and Saint John of the cross

used to say that anyone who gets

contemplation which would be the Roman
Catholic equivalent of at least second
genre I assume

um St John lacrosse said anyone who

cannot Master it but who get it and then

and lose it and then get it and then
lose it and then get it and then lose it
sort of like

the monk gotika in a weird polytext that
I'll be getting to later on in this q a
but anyone who gets it and loses it and
gets it and loses it and can't
consistently master high contemplation
well God just has other plans for such a
person

and that was kind of uh

I don't know it's disappointing to me
because I was like that I mean I get it
and lose it and get it and lose it and
get it and lose it I mean assuming that
it really was Jonna
the whole term Jonna is almost useless

because it's so controversial but anyway
so what is the Buddhist equivalent of
God has other plans I just assume it
means that you just don't have the comma
for it I mean the Burmese people would
talk about parami which is
um sort of a kind of karmic
Perfection with regard to a certain
category of mental states there are 10
paramies I won't get into it but
um like the first one is Donna or
generosity the next one is Sila or or
morality and um I mean probably be like
panya which would be one of the one of
the ten Perfections or the 10 paramis
maybe that's just not complete enough

yet

um

but it's just it's a karmic thing it's

it's uh

that that's pretty much how a Buddhist

would have to explain it at least a

terrible Buddhist so I'll uh just move

on to the next question here and this is

from ascetic gang

and he also changes his name every once

in a while I've noticed this is like his

third name so far just within the past

few months

so I hope this doesn't reflect on my

viewers like uh continually changing

their names to avoid the police or

something

so anyway ascetic gang says

you don't have to answer the following

question in the next video since it's

pretty long well

people ask longer questions than this so

this is fair game it is nice to get kind

of concise questions but I mean if you

if the question is such that you can't

ask it in a short version but it has to

be kind of lengthy like it's got a big

quote that you want to comment on you

you can do that too although short

questions are nice

anyway he says if you are in the mood

you can answer it by comment which

yeah I'm I'm gonna answer it here it

somehow shaken to my face in the Buddha
when I learned that he publicly
humiliated a monk and insulted him
according to the majum in ikaya suta 22
the Buddha asked the Monk arita
who was formerly a vulture trainer
supposedly

um but that's not hearing the question
here according to majum and Kaya suda 22
the Buddha asked the monk arita if an
evil Viewpoint had Arisen in him arita
answered quote yes indeed Lord I
understand the dhamma taught by the
blessed one and those acts the blessed
one says are obstructive when are
obstructive when indulgent are not
genuine obstructions unquote

the Buddha responded by saying that he is a worthless man who didn't understand the dhamma correctly and asked the other monks if arita is even warm in this dhamma and winia they denied it when this was said the monk arita sat silent abashed his shoulders drooping his head down brooding at a loss for words after the Buddha saw the condition of arita he said again that he is a worthless man and that he will be recognized for his own evil Viewpoint here I get the impression that the Buddha is insulting among harita and I get the impression that the Buddha is publicly humiliating him in front of the

other monks arita seems very negatively affected mentally and physically he seems to be suffering the vinya explains that arita is subsequently expelled from the community of monks because he has not renounced his opinion so perhaps the humiliation and insult he potentially suffered put him in an attitude of psychological defense so that he wouldn't change his mind and was eventually expelled so this gives me the impression that humiliation and insult were not adequate Pedas I'm not sure what that means p-e-d-a-s paid us to put arita back on the right path of dhamma okay so yeah this is a well-known case of

arita who was formerly a vulture trainer
whatever that means there's you've got
like commentators sort of discussing
what being a vulture trainer could be
um and this whole story it it struck me
as pretty fishy just from the way it
starts I mean it's even included here
where the Buddha asks arita
um if if he had I mean if he was
following a pernicious wrong View and
arita says yeah I follow the pernicious
wrong view that what you said is an
obstruction isn't really an obstruction
and I the commentarial tradition says
that when they're talking about
obstructions they're talking about

wallowing and sensuality

so I mean why would the Buddha ask do
you believe the pernicious wrong view
that what I say is an obstruction isn't
really obstruction and it reaches like
even so venerable Lord

but I believe the pernicious wrong view
I mean he's like admitting that he's got
wrong view right at the beginning which
is

I mean I think the story has been
monkeyed with a little bit because you'd
think that someone who believes
something isn't just gonna write off the
bat admit that it's a pernicious wrong
view why would you believe it if you
consider it to be wrong

so

um he doesn't really call him a
worthless man he calls him Moga Parisa
Moga purisa which it means empty man
and uh I mean Moga is not necessarily
derogatory

necessarily like there's a brahmana who
asks the Buddha some questions in uh in
the Pariah navaga of the sutiny Pata and
his name is Moga Raja which means empty
king

so empty man I mean it means like
I mean you could interpret it as
worthless or futile or just foolish
um you know he's just not getting it is
essentially what it means in this case

and um

yeah I mean the Buddha doesn't have to be nice and polite to everyone especially I mean he's the leader of this group and you've got somebody just misrepresenting him I mean if you can believe his own words he's willfully misrepresenting him because he he agrees that what he's saying is a pernicious wrong View and he's going around saying it anyway

so I think the Buddha was well within his rights to scold this person in front of others partly to make an example of him just to show you know what this guy is saying is wrong I mean it should be pretty obvious

um but just because you had the Buddha
for a teacher doesn't mean that he's
going to
you know be
uh what's the word just
what is the word like he can't be fixed
you know you've got the there's the
stereotypical group of six who are these
six monks who are just complete Rascals
they're always messing around breaking
rules getting into trouble doing bad
things and even though they lived in the
Buddhist time I mean they were coming
into contact with an enlightened sage
still I mean they were like the spoon
that doesn't taste the soup I mean they

just

and some people I mean just because you
have an enlightened teacher doesn't mean
that you're going to get enlightened or
that you're even going to become
particularly wise if you're just too
foolish to get it

and that was kind of the implication
with arita here

and uh the fact that he was expelled
from the community that's

um he he couldn't be defrocked I mean
the only person that can de-robe a monk
is that monk himself

ah

but

um there is a formal Act of

oh what is it called expulsion from the Sangha sort of where it's like other monks aren't allowed to interact with you you know you get the silent treatment you're not allowed to to sleep under the same roof of the monk like this you're not supposed to discuss Domino with a monk like this and one of the reasons for expelling a monk like this is if he stubbornly refuses to give up a wrong View and when the Buddha himself is telling him you know this is not what I'm teaching you're misrepresenting me and then he just stubbornly persists then he's got his own agenda I mean he just

wanted to wallow in sensuality or some
such and

um

so

I mean there's neem corolli Baba who for
all I know may have been an enlightened
being if it's even possible to become
fully enlightened in this world when the
samsara context

I mean he'd yell at people and then
pound on people and all sorts of things
it was

I mean a good devout terravada Buddhist
would say well if that's the case he
couldn't possibly be in line buds huh
in other ways he was just really just
Superman

so let's see what is the question here I
mean is there a question mark

let's see

maybe he just wants comment on this

yeah well it's it shook

ascetic gang's face that the Buddha

would harshly scold a monk who

stubbornly clung to a a wrong View and

was misrepresenting the Buddha and

sometimes you gotta be tough I mean

just being nice and just letting them do

whatever they please isn't going to work

very well especially if you're actually

trying to to help people to liberate

people or helping them to liberate

themselves you can't have somebody like

this just throwing dust in people's eyes
and causing confusion and so forth
so yeah I think the insults of the woman
calling her a you know what is this full
of urine and dung I wouldn't want to
touch it even with my foot
um who I mean she wasn't a monk she
probably wasn't a Buddhist yeah she
wasn't a Buddhist at the time it was
just sort of a gratuitous insult to this
to this young woman I mean that would be
more blameworthy I think than blaming or
like scolding a disciple for seemingly
willingly misrepresenting what you're
saying and just sort of perverting it
so I'll just move on to the next
question here this is from Athena's

sigil

and Athena sigil says my question for a further video is on the statuary of terravonna Buddhism in tibetan vajrayana and Mahayana in general Buddhist iconography is very essential and important to transmit dharmic teachings what role does it play in teravana well I mean there's no mention of statues in the polytopitica that I know of Because by the time the polytopitica was composed Buddha statues hadn't even been invented yet of course there are some who who theorize that the Buddha statues were invented by Greeks and there is good

evidence to support that
and the Greeks really didn't uh
convert to Buddhism in any significant
numbers until Alexander the Great
conquered Northwestern India and
established like Greek colonies on the
borders of India
or even within what was India then
and uh some of them converted to
Buddhism including King menandros
apparently
uh who is better known as king Melinda
in the the poly poly literature
so I mean just with regard to the texts
themselves
iconography really has no place at all
it just Buddhist iconography didn't

really exist other than I mean at least
with regard to Buddhist statues with the
mudras and so forth I mean you you'd
have like a footprint or a body leaf or
an empty seat or some such to
sort of represent the Buddha but also at
the same time

imply into our show symbolically that he
just wasn't in samsara anymore he was no
longer in this world or any world
so by the time Tibetan vajriana and
Mahayana came around

um in

long before their their scriptures were
finished then you had Buddha statues and
um

you had a much more variety with regard to mudras like in in taravana they're only like four main mudras who that represent

four of the main

moments in the Buddha's life you know

you've got the Jana mudra with his hands

like here let me get it up high enough

like this like like that Buddha statue

up there

the John amudra which is indicating his

his Enlightenment essentially you've got

the boomi Pasa mudra which is the the

usual one you find in Burma which is

ironic because he wasn't even the Buddha

yet that was like the night of his

Enlightenment where he's he's touching

the Earth to call the Earth as his
witness that he has the right to sit
under that Bodhi Tree and strive for
enlightenment because Mara is trying to
talk him out of it of course

um you have this mudra I don't remember
the the poly name for it but he's like
counting off on his fingers and that's
the first sermon that's the Buddha's
starting Buddhism by counting off the
four noble truths on his fingers and
then the other main one is where the
Buddha is lying down on his right side
and that's the parinirvana mudra and
that's indicating his death
and I mean they're used for devotional

purposes you know just almost any

Monastery will have at least one Buddha

image

um most Burmese lay people I think would

have like if they if they're Buddhist

enough if they're devout enough to have

an altar in their house then it's very

likely they're going to have a Buddha

statue there and they will bow to it and

they'll offer little cups of food and

water to it and so forth It's not really

endorsed in the text themselves

um but it's just become tradition

so

that's really all there is to it I think

I mean I wasn't really into bowing to

Buddha statues unlike most Burmese monks

um possibly in a past life I was like a Christian who was really down on idolatry or something it just it just doesn't make sense to me I mean some people would say you know by not bowing to the Statue or the image you're not you're refusing to bow to the Buddha and I'm just pointing that statue pointing out you know that statue has no Sila no samadhi no punya you know it's just it's just rock or brass or whatever but um so I mean you can be a good devout terravonna Buddhist and not have anything to do with Buddha statues or any other kind of Buddhist iconography it's it's largely irrelevant it has

become traditional in Buddhist cultures
but

all in all it's it's largely just a side
issue it's it's pretty much irrelevant

so I'll just move on to the next

question here and this is from kzen

or kazen

like in the man Kazan Wars

any science fiction Geeks out there

might get the reference

and kazen says

have you heard of the subreddit stream

entry and the seemingly endless amount

of stream enterers online

um no I've never heard of the subreddit

stream entry until reading this question

although I have encountered lots of

people who consider themselves to be
stream enterers

so I'm not surprised that you'd have a
subreddit with all these people claiming
to be stream enterers and

I don't know how to approach this I mean
those of you who watch my my cues and
A's my q and A's

I'm not sure the proper plural there but
anyway any of you who watch these videos
know that I do have the idea that
originally a stream enterer or a
sodapono was just like they were like
Born Again Buddhist I mean they were
just uh had converted to Buddhism and
they were like entering upon a spiritual

life

that was a stream enter that you would

you dedicated yourself to living a

spiritual life it didn't necessarily

involve any kind of superhuman mental

States anything like that any glimpses

of nibana anything like that but

gradually as taravadan tradition

developed

a stream enter was

um the lowest of the four levels of

sainthood which means that once you

become a sodapona there are certain

naughty things you can't do anymore like

tell lies and you are guaranteed of no

more lower Realms no more animal realm

No More Hell Realms no more ghost Realms

anything like that until you become
enlightened and you'd become enlightened
I think what is it five or I didn't even
I don't even remember the number because
it's just irrelevant to me but within a
limited number of lifetimes you will
become enlightened
and uh so probably most of these people
they're not going with my theory that
originally was just someone embarking
upon a spiritual life they probably
really think that they are
um sages like Buddhist Saints
and like I said I've met a lot of people
who who believe that they're Arias of
some sort you know in the Buddhist

spiritual sense and my opinion is that
most of them are mistaken

so

so yeah there's seemingly endless amount
of them not only online but walking
around meditation centers in in Asia
also

you know there's lots of them

so I mean it's it's kind of interesting
like

um some of them are just really like
psychotic like

um you know it's sort of a stereotype
that a Christian person

if he is like delusional like he's he's
like schizophrenic or something he'll
believe himself to be Christ he'll be

believe himself to be the Messiah but
I've found that with regard to naughty
Buddhists

I mean nobody is claiming to be maitreya
Buddha or Matea Buddha unless they're
like

like con man or something you know
they're not doing it because they
sincerely believe it

um like L Ron Hubbard was declared to be
Matea Buddha in on on in one of his
books or a book about him by by the
Scientologist or something

yeah but but it's like Buddhist nutty
people seem to be more humble you know
they're not declaring themselves to be

the second coming or the Messiah or
anything that they'll just declare
themselves to be stream enterers or soda
paws

and uh some of them can be very
very arrogant and smug in their
sainthood

um but even I I do think that there is
some value in a statement in The Diamond
Cutter suture even though it's it's a
Mahayana text

it's an early inspired Mahayana attacks
and it says anyone who's really in Arya
like a like a stream enterer you know
they've gone beyond self-view that's one
of the things you leave behind when you
become an aria you know you don't

believe in in us that you have a self
anymore you're not identified with your
ego anymore and so you're not gonna go
around saying I'm a stream enterer you
know I'm an arya it it's uh it seems
unlikely to me because the whole I mean
mine has been transcended

so

I guess the uh
the the simple answer to this question I
I really am opposed to simple answers
apparently I always my answers are
always 20 times longer than the question
itself at least
but um have I heard of the subreddit
stream entry no

although I have

heard of a seemingly endless amount of

stream enters wandering about the

Buddhist areas of this world

and I've met quite a few of them

so I'll just move on to kazan's next

question here

he says also what do you think of the

Dark Knight of soul in modern times

concerning people who go through extreme

depersonalization

and have you gone through

depersonalization at some point not

expecting an answer here of course

hopefully you find time to address on a

future video well this is the future

video which is now the present video

and I really didn't even know what
depersonalization was or is I had to
look it up like an hour ago
this as I'm compiling the questions and
getting everything straight and
everything

um I figured I'd better look it up just
so I I just couldn't just say on on
so uh depersonalization according to the
Merriam-Webster Dictionary

it's it's got like uh

one is an act or process of
depersonalizing

um the quality or state of being

depersonalized which isn't helpful at

all but uh the second definition here is

is probably what we're going for here A
psychopathological syndrome
characterized by loss of identity and
feelings of unreality and strangeness
about one's own behavior well that
feelings of unreality and strangeness
about one's own behavior that's sounding
kind of like schizophrenia because
schizophrenics are kind of like that
that's why it's called schizophrenia
it's not the multiple personalities like
schizophrenia I mean split head
you know it's it's not because you've
got to split personalities because it's
like your your internal world and your
external Behavior become sort of
detached so that it's sort of like

you're watching another person you know
walking around the room and eating and
going to going potty and stuff

so um

let's see what's the question again here

uh what do I think of Dark Knight of

Dark Knight of the soul in modern times

concerning people who go through extreme

depersonalization well I mean the

psychopathological synonym character

loss of identity I mean that's what

Buddhists are going for I mean you you

want to to transcend the ego and stop

clinging to it which loss of identity in

in and of itself would be a good thing

for a Buddhist feelings of unreality and

strangeness about one's own behavior
well I mean that's kind of a Buddhist
virtue also because I mean it's this is
samsara it's kind of delusional anyway
so I mean feelings of unreality and
strangeness about what is ultimately
delusional

I mean that that would be good too but
people that aren't well versed in
Buddhist philosophy you know they're
normies or something you know they just
beyond the level of an NPC I suppose who
would be without
any sense of identity also I guess
but um
oh what was it where was I going with
that

um yeah it's like you can get into these states that from a Buddhist point of view are are desirable or you know worth working towards you know sort of a goal and then but they're not ready for it yet and so it just completely messes them up or scares them it's sort of like in meditation

some people they start you know going beyond the ego and they just Panic they get scared they feel like they're dying or something that's fairly common

um I'm not exactly sure if he's talking about Buddhist people

or just the ordinary person

but I mean it's not it would seem like a

mixed blessing to me because the loss of
identity ultimately is a good thing and
the feelings of unreality and
strangeness about one's own behavior
yeah in a way that's kind of it's kind
of a good thing too

um but I mean I used to have these
experiences when I was a kid especially
it became rarer and rarer as I got older
where you just all of a sudden struck by
the just

bizarre

miracle and just

strangeness of even existing

you know we're I mean we're like these

bones covered with meat that are

bouncing on our hind legs and just kind

of moving around and you know we got
sweat coming off of us sometimes and we
have to put cloth over our bodies
because somehow our own bodies are
obscene and I don't know it's just
really strange if you think about it
just just being a human is itself pretty
weird

so in a way that's kind of an Insight I
think but it could be just an Insight
that's like sneaking up on them and
jumping on them from behind and they're
just not ready for it and it freaks them
out maybe because they might think that
this is reality and I really do have a
self and so forth

so just being attacked by certain
insights

can uh really I mean they're just not
ready for it and then it can mess them
up but all in all I think

depersonalization doesn't sound all that
bad

you can call it a Dark Night of the Soul
St John of the Cross was saying you know
the Dark Knight of the soul is I mean
you're getting close when that happens
to you and you feel like you're you know
infinitely far away light years away
from salvation or anything that's that's
when you're getting really close
so hopefully some of these people that
are experiencing the the extreme

depersonalization are actually coming through it uh wiser and better people but um again this is today's the first I've ever really heard about it other than reading Buddhist texts that are kind of praising the same sort of thing

so I'll just move on to the next question here this is from Austin and Austin says is self-realization also Maya and I forgot to just a second I forgot to look it up not that I'm gonna look up the answer but it's in uh the Tibetan book of the great liberation

yeah I got it written down in this
little notebook that I used to have as a
monk

I like like little books like this that
you can carry around

let's see

let's see there's this one section of
the the Tibetan book of the great
liberation

that uh it really addresses this issue
fairly well

let's see

I just bear with me here

in general all things mentally perceived
are Concepts okay this is how it starts
good the bodily forms in which the world
of appearances is contained are also

concepts of mind the quintessence of the
six classes of beings is also a mental
concept the happiness of gods in heaven
worlds and of men is another mental
concept the three unhappy states of
suffering two are concepts of the Mind
ignorance miseries in the five poisons
are likewise mental Concepts
self-originated Divine wisdom is also a
concept of the Mind the full realization
of the passing away into Nirvana is also
a concept of Mind Misfortune caused by
demons and evil spirits is also a
concept of Mind gods and God Good
Fortune are also concepts of Mind
likewise the various Perfections are

mental Concepts unconscious one
pointedness is also a mental concept the
color of any objective thing is also a
mental concept the qualitiness at
quality-less and formless is also a
mental concept the one and the many in
at one minute is also a mental concept
existence and non-existence as well as
the non-created are concepts of the Mind
nothing saved mind is conceivable
so

I'm getting back to Austin's question
here is self-realization also Maya the
concept of self-realization
self-realization as a thing yeah it's
just it's just more Maya it's more
samsara it's a concept

but if you go beyond the concepts then

what lies beyond the concepts

yeah that's not a concept

so it depends on how you look at it so

I'll just move on to Austin's next

question since that question took me so

long to answer because it spent five

minutes just trying to find a place in a

book

so Austin says

what's your take on empiricism versus

rationalism is Buddhism strict

empiricism

well that's kind of an interesting

question it's kind of sort of a western

philosophical question like

um rationalism

um there are some rationalist

philosophers like like Spinoza was a

rationalist you know he was trying to

get everything down into like facts you

know like his ethics he's trying to get

ethics down to a science based on pure

logic

so you start with self-evident facts

presumably and then you just deduce

everything from that and that would be

irrationalism leibnitz would be another

rationalist I think Descartes was a

rationalist on the other hand empiricism

would be more like David Hume where

um he was I mean he he used logic also

but he considered a more important

source of Truth is not so much
rationality and logic as just observing
reality

and just going with that as as closely
as possible

so I mean David Hume is one of my
favorite Western philosophers and uh
I think I do prefer empiricism to
rationalism but you can call science
empiricism you know empirical science
but still there's a lot of
rationalization you know a lot of
rationality involved

so

I guess empiricism has to have a lot of
rationalism incorporated into it as a

general rule but then you get to
Buddhism and he's asking here is
Buddhism strict empiricism in a way it
is because obviously early Buddhism I
mean before abhidham and the
commentaries came along and just the
long complicated sutas that are like
lists of
this and that and the other and
questions and answers with all these
this technical jargon before we get to
that stage you know when you're at the
the primordial stage of Buddhism like
niantika Wagga for example then yeah
it's just
see reality in the scene there is only
the scene you don't even think about it

you don't formulate any beliefs about it
you know it's just all concepts of mind
which is what you're trying to to go
beyond

so yeah in a sense it is strict
empiricism but it's it's it'd be more
accurate to call it mysticism
because mysticism is just like direct
experience of ultimate truth

um so I guess that would be like an
extreme form of empiricism it'd be like
empiricism with all the rationalization
to all the rationalism Left Behind
so I think that would be I think that
would be a justifiable statement
that Buddhism is strict empiricism in

that it is strict mysticism like even
mysticism is stripped of all the
traditional stuff

but really I mean that's just for the
most advanced practitioners because as a
general rule Buddhism is not strict
empiricism it's got all this abhidham
stuff which is rationalism and also it
just has appeals to Authority you know
it says this in the text I'm a Buddhist
therefore I'm going to believe what this
text says and probably most Buddhists
take that route

so

the most the more advanced the Buddhism
gets the more empirical it gets until
you're just viewing reality as it is

in the scene there's only the scene
so I think I'll just uh move on to
Austin's next question here
and he says I come from Utah where the
majority of people are Mormon have you
ever had any interactions with Mormon
missionaries either as a monk or as a
Layman if so how did it go I only
remember interacting with a Mormon
missionary once and I was a Buddhist
monk at the time in America I was
walking across a University campus with
this friend of mine who wasn't a monk he
was a layperson
and a Mormon missionary came up to me
and he asked me if I've read the book of

Mormon and I said yeah I've read it
which I I have read the book of Mormon
which is surreal I have to say
and he said well what did you think of
it and I said well for starters I do
think it's highly unlikely that the
American Indians are like a degenerate
race of of Hebrews that were cursed by
God six or seven hundred years before
the birth of Jesus for not believing in
Jesus and that's what the Book of Mormon
says that the American Indians or the
Native Americans
or I mean they were like Jews
who before the Babylonians sacked
Jerusalem were told by God to come to
Central America I think they don't they

don't really say exactly where but I
think it's probably like mesoamerica
somewhere

this Ark comes over and then one of the
factions of these people because they
don't believe in Jesus again hundreds of
years before Jesus was born they're
cursed by God and made to look
ugly and repulsive not my words it's in
the Book of Mormon

um

so I just told him that and and like the
the smile just kind of evaporated from
his face and he said well I think you're
misinterpreting The Book of Mormon I'd
say well

and that's what it says so yeah that was about it he kind of lost interest in me because I was like uh kind of hit him with a fact grenade so that was that was it that was my only interaction with um Mormon missionaries although when I was a young monk still living in California there was a Jehovah's Witness guy and they always come in pairs so there'll always be someone with him it'd be a different person different times but he was coming like once a week trying to convert me to being a Jehovah's Witness and bless his heart I mean he just didn't know what he was up

against

it was kind of fun debating with him but also very frustrating at the same time because of course they'll say let us be open-minded which means let you be open-minded enough to reject your own beliefs and accept my beliefs and then just slam the door closed you know lock it throw away the key and remain closed-minded for the rest of your life

so it was very frustrating just trying to trying to get any Headway with this guy although there was a few questions that I was able to formulate that he couldn't answer and that was sort of I

kind of scored a point on that one like
um Jehovah's Witnesses believe that
animals have like a temporary soul
they're not just completely mindless
automatons like some Christians believe
but that they can't go to heaven
although if you yeah they can't go to
heaven or they can't really be saved
and so I was saying like why are they
being punished with death and disease
and all this when they have nothing to
learn from it humans you know according
to the story you know
um we're being punished by death and
disease and so forth
um because you know Adam and Eve and
they ate the fruit and you know it's

like it's sort of teaching us a lesson
so that we'll turn to God again but
animals don't even have that option and
they're just getting
you know they're they're suffering a lot
you know they have very difficult lives
a lot of them and he couldn't answer
that

but I don't want to continue to rant
about Jehovah Witnesses I went on this
long rant about Jehovah Witnesses last
week and then it turned out that it
wasn't recording and I better be
recording now by golly yeah it looks
like it's recording ah
yeah I went two hours almost two hours

and it turned out not to record last time and I had to do it all over again and the second time did not include the Jehovah Witness rant and yeah I should probably restrain myself this time as well since it hasn't very little to do with the question because the question is about Mormon missionaries but I will say I have read the book of Mormon and it is just astonishing how intelligent some Mormons are you know like that what was his name Ken Jennings who was he was like this Unstoppable Juggernaut on Jeopardy I mean he won he won like a zillion gajillion dollars on Jeopardy he just was like this walking encyclopedia he was really intelligent and he was a

Mormon and you read the book of Mormon
and it's it's so unbelievable you know
even the stuff about the American
Indians being degenerate Jews and so
forth

um also

um the guy who wrote the book
or channeled the book it is a channeled
document what's his name

Smith

Joseph Smith

he apparently was
relatively ignorant of military strategy
since whenever he describes any kind of
Siege or battle or anything in the Book
of Mormon

there's there's only two strategies that
they used one was

um let's see

one was just to get the other side drunk
you just throw a bunch of like flasks of
wine over the walls

and then the the guards drink the wine
get drunk pass out and then they climb
over the walls and Sack the city that's
that's one of the two strategies and the
other one was I think it's right out of
the book of

uh what's the book right after

um

Exodus the book of who was who is

Moses's right hand man I think it starts
with a J anyway there's this strategy

there where

um they try to attack a city and then
pretend to run away and then the Army
chases them but then they leave the
gates conveniently open and then you've
got another Detachment of reinforcements
hiding in the bushes nearby and then
they just run in through the open Gates
and Sack the city

and those were like the two military
strategies other than just line up and
just hack at each other with with Spears
and swords and scimitars and stuff

so

yeah the Book of Mormon is it's really
surreal and it's just like an

anthropological study that really people
can believe anything I mean that's
that's really an Insight that I've
gotten from observing the human race is
people can believe anything no matter
how ridiculous it is I mean just look at
the political situation nowadays

I mean

how can how could Joe Biden get slightly
more than half the vote of all the
voters in America

considering that he's he's like
senile at I mean just at the very least
senile and crooked

but

I mean

the Mormons believe even sillier stuff I

guess than than post-modern Democrats do
but

I guess I should just move on to

Austin's next question

because not only is that her am I

indulging in a rant it's like a

disjointed ramp

so Austin's next question here is

could intensively studying Dharma

Concepts before establishing a solid

sitting practice impede your progress

along the path and that reminds me of

something that ajan cha said

and ajan Shah said

he said this is why most people who have

studied a lot and become monks never get

anywhere their knowledge is of a
different kind on a different path the
knowledge of the Buddha is not worldly
knowledge it is super a mundane
knowledge a different way altogether
unquote

so yeah I think well he was mainly
pointing to like scholar monks scholar
monks usually don't make much progress
in dhamma because their head is so full
of Concepts they're just kind of locked
into this this interlocking set of
Concepts that I mean it becomes like a
mental cage for them it's like a mental
prism

and uh so I mean to study dhamma
Concepts

before establishing it before
establishing a selling sitting practice
I mean to get some familiarity with the
jargon you know as long as you're not
clinging to it

I think it can be helpful

but if you've got everything figured out
you know you've got this whole thing's
you know you study abhidham for example
you got all the lists memorized you know
you've got it all worked out this is how
dhamma is and then you start meditating

I mean you're just you're kind of

Trapped because

especially if you really believe you
know all this technical jargon

this technical system this huge
Scholastic edifice of of philosophy you
know as long as you're really believing
that then that becomes like a mental
prison it's like shackles it just
prevents you from making much progress
unless you can somehow just get slammed
by some kind of powerful Insight just
out of your rut
in some way or another
so

yeah so let's get back to the question
here could intensively studying Dharma
Concepts before establishing a solid
sitting practice impede your progress
along the path it can if you really like
Faith oriented or like intellectually

oriented where you take these mental
Concepts and make them your religion
and then

um like a lot of monks in Burma are
Scholars you know scholar monks that
even if their own personal experience
deviates from what abhi dhamma says they
should experience they'll just follow
abidamo you know they'll they'd rather
trust the book than trust their own
personal experience and I mean that's
just a recipe for failure

so I guess I'll just move on to the next
question here this is from Joe Doe and
Joe Doe says

do you believe monks can become

Immortals

and from the Buddhist point of view

nobody becomes an immortal even the Gods

in the heaven Realms are not immortal

so I mean there just are no Immortals

in in Buddhist cosmology or Buddhist

philosophy in general that everything

that has a beginning has an end

so if you become an immortal then you're

gonna have to stop being one which means

you were never an immortal to begin with

so no I do not believe that monks can

become Immortals it just goes against

Buddhist philosophy everything that has

a beginning has an end and uh I mean

that's just a basic insight

that everything that has a beginning has

an end

and there are no Immortals I mean there might be gods in the highest Heaven Realms that live for literally billions of years but even they eventually are going to pass away from that place and reappear somewhere else according to their Kama

so I'll just move on to the next question here this is from CEO of action and CEO vacch and sipad zidana says Brian Rue claimed that ajan Sona said to him that the reason Buddhist countries suffered so much from communism is due to Karma of insulting arahans do you believe this and do you believe the same

logic could apply to why India itself
also just started getting destroyed by
everyone else for Millennia due to the
same principle

um I'm kind of skeptical that for
example the Khmer Rouge in Cambodia or
you know some of the worst aspects of
the Burmese military government
in in Burma are caused by the karma of
insulting Iran's if you read the text
the karma from insulting orons is really
awful that you're going to go to hell
for that but

I'm not so sure I mean the Burmese they
they don't want to insult Laura haunts
unless the aura hunt happens not to be a
terravonna Buddhist and then they just

won't believe that he's in our hunt

so

um

yeah I'm kind of skeptical of that I

mean it's hard to say exactly why it is

you know what kind of karma the

Cambodian Buddhist people had that then

brought the Khmer Rouge down on them

with monks being executed or or just

being worked to death or whatever

um from my experience in Burma I think

it might be more plausible that the

Burmese live a rough life it's not

entirely on due to demerit I mean it's

not necessarily bad karma that they're

living under a military dictatorship

because the military dictatorship keeps them living like a simple Spartan kind of life that is more conducive to practicing dharma you know you cannot serve both God and Mammon so if you've got no Mammon to serve you know serving God or dharma in this case comes easier so that's a possibility but with regard to the bad aspects

um when I was living in Burma I was more of the opinion that I mean it could be due to like really sloppy monks that most of the monks really are just they're not even trying to become enlightened and

um just the Burmese in general I mean

bless their hearts that in some ways
they are superior to us westerners in
certain ways you know they live a more
dharma-oriented life
but as a general rule they're like
afraid of their own shadow you know they
live in this chronic fear and it's not
just of the government they fear the
government but they fear too much
sunshine and rain and wind and I mean
ghosts and witches I mean they're afraid
of lots and lots of stuff and fear is is
always Bad Karma so I mean they aren't
generating Bad Karma partly just because
they're human but with regard to
cambodians yeah I really don't know

enough about what Cambodia was like
before the Khmer Rouge you know what
state damage was in in Cambodian Buddhism
um before the khmerus started
perpetrating their atrocities
but I'm not so sure it's due to the
karma of insulting our Hans because the
Burmese they go the other way and
they're willing to they don't want to
insult any Monk just because they think
you insult monks you can go to hell so
that's one reason why the monks are so
sloppy is because nobody dares to
criticize them they can do as they
please they can just be completely
sloppy lacks Shameless unconscientious
monks they still get support

so it could be something more along the lines of that just sort of a kind of decadence in this case like a spiritual decadence even though the people are very

Faith oriented you know they're very devout and they may take keeping five precepts seriously

um the monks themselves it's a different case it's sort of like Medieval Europe you know I mean they were very very religious in medieval Europe but still I mean it was a disaster Medieval Europe was not a good place to live you know these wars and plagues and and Psychopathic Kings and Emperors and

dukes and so forth just making all kinds
of trouble

so

yeah I think it would just be like the
uh to some degree cultural condition and
some to some degree just anthropological
um defilements of of the people that uh
eventually results in karmic blowback
that would be my guess but I mean it's
hard to say different people in Cambodia
would have different comma

and maybe it was just the fruition of
different sorts of comma for different
people

um you know sort of like it is in Burma
but um I mean if you want to live a
dharmic life you're probably better off

in Burma I mean especially if you're
going to be a renunciant if you're
really gonna go for it you're better off
in Burma than in the West
so even despite the military
dictatorship they do have a lot going
for them in a non-material sense
it's just that materialists go there and
they say oh look at all the poverty you
know they just assume that it's going to
be misery and squalor when I mean you
you walk down the the road which is dirt
and covered with goat turds in a Burmese
Village you're gonna see way more happy
smiles than you're going to see walking
down the street in in pretty much

anywhere in America

and they're real smiles too they're

genuine happy smiles

so they can live in squalor by Western

standards you know well below the

poverty line

and still they have less suffering in

their life than we do

mainly because they have less desire

than we do I mean it's just second Noble

Truths right there

so let's see oh that's the next part of

this question is do you believe the same

logic would apply to India itself also

just started getting destroyed by

everyone else from Millennia due to the

same principle I'm not sure what caused

India to you know for example get
invaded by Turkish Muslims and have
Buddhism pretty much eradicated by
essentially Exterminating the Buddhists
um or just forcing them to flee or
convert

um partly it could just be like the
degeneracy of Buddhism or of Dharma in
general and again it could be just a lot
of stuff that was sort of incidental to
religion you know it's just sort of the
defilements of the people certain like
culturally conditioned defilements even
that uh sort of weakened the
civilization

um

so that bad things started happening to a greater degree but even when Buddhism was like at its peak I guess I guess it was at its peak under Ashoka around thereabouts

so it was sort of a golden age for Buddhism then but in the Buddhist time when Buddhism arose again it was I mean you had Psychopathic Kings invading other kingdoms or just preying upon their own their own people you had forests infested with Bandits and and tigers and so forth diseases that nobody had cures for because their modern medicine hadn't been developed um well maybe some of the easier stuff like diarrhea they might have had some

cures for just herbal stuff but no
antibiotics anything like that
so

yeah it's just part of the human
condition that there's always going to
be sort of a balance of positive and
negative so you have lots of positive
there's going to be lots of negative
balancing it out that could be another
explanation now we're just living in a
state of mediocrity I think
where I mean we're just sort of jaded
nothing is really all that great
and nothing is really all that horrible
either I mean for a lot of people anyway
so I guess I'll just move on to Sea of

Action sipad zidane's next question here
and that is

is active meditation even a thing do you
think this Flow State which comes from
Taoist teachings is actually the same as
meditation because I find it hard to
believe someone can focus on doing a
task so much that they will gain some
liberating Insight well you don't have
to have the potential for liberating
Insight in order for it to be meditation
um at the elementary levels meditation
is just a sort of like mental
calisthenics you know it's like push-ups
or jumping jacks or something it's just
a way of like disciplining and calming
your mind

so it doesn't have to be conducive to
liberating Insight or Jonna for example
in order for it to qualify as legitimate
meditation

while reading this question I'm reminded
of GERD chef

what's his name George George gertchev

I don't remember his first name now but

I mean he'd have his disciples you know

the people coming to his his Meditation

Center or whatever he called it and he

would just assign them these tasks that

were active meditations like they might

just be like

like wiping the the dust off the leaves

of a rose bush you know and you have to

do it very mindfully

you know just just in the moment no

wandering thoughts if possible

um and I would consider that to be a

kind of meditation I mean walking

meditation is definitely a kind of

meditation I've gotten into some

relatively relatively deep meditative

States you know I'm not like

trance or anything but you get into a

really just your mind is is silent and

clear and you're just doing the walking

meditation it's just you know it's like

the sounds of the The Crickets and so

forth they're just kind of going through

you you're aware of them and and that's

about as far as it gets you know the the

air on your skin and the your clothing
brushing against your skin and you know
just the ground against your feet and
all that I mean

that is it's a powerful it's a powerful
device I mean you might not get into the
really most subtle States from doing
that but still you can get into deeper
meditative States than most people get
while sitting cross-legged with their
eyes closed

um I think this was derived from an
answer I gave in the last question and
answer about some people get addicted to
Danger sports like rock climbing and
motorcycle racing because you're forced

to be completely Mindful and right there
in the moment without wandering thoughts
because if you if your mind wanders for
half a second you can be dead
and those people a lot of these people
can't really come up with a way of
getting into those same intense
mindfulness States uh while not doing
the dangerous sport that is requiring
them to be as mindful as possible
so let's see here
so active meditation is a thing and it's
it's endorsed even in the early texts
where uh something coming up or or just
Chun coming up walking back and forth
walking meditation it was you know
according to like vinya the Buddha

endorsed it for monks it's a good thing
to do helps you from being sleepy helps
your food to digest and also it kind of
keeps the momentum of meditation going
so that when you sit down you're not
sitting down just starting to meditate
every time that you have like this
momentum going like some Burmese
meditation instructors they'll talk
about I think this might be in the text
too somewhere where
meditating meditating is like trying to
start a fire by rubbing two sticks
together you know if you rub the two
sticks together for five minutes and
then stop and then you know a little

later you rub the sticks together a little bit more and then stop I mean you're not gonna get a fire because you have to keep the momentum going I mean the heat has to keep increasing you can't just keep stopping and that's what walking meditation does and just general mindfulness and just overall mindfulness of eating mindfulness of going using the the toilet whatever just keep the mindfulness going and then it helps you to keep the momentum going so that when you sit down cross-legged with your eyes closed it's not just starting from from zero that you're you're still it it is helpful I can tell you that much

so whether you if you want to become enlightened it may be necessary to either become enlightened accidentally from some disaster befalling you or just sitting across like it I think for most westerners who have some kind of Awakening experience it's more likely to come from a disaster or just some sort of Crisis that slams them out of their old habits in and their old you know ideas of who they are and so forth than through sitting in meditation but that may change as more and more westerners sit in meditation and do it seriously not just as a hobby or a substitute for Narcotics or whatever

so I'll just move on to the next

question here this is from White Ash

Piper

and white ash Piper says Dave is Amazon

the only way to buy one of your books

and yes at present it is

I've considered I mean

early on especially I was considered

other Publishers or or whatever but

Amazon is is simple and easy so that's

what I went with so yeah if you do want

one of my books pretty much have to get

it from Amazon

and uh the links for my books are

down below

so the next question is from grasshopper

and grasshopper says how do you

differentiate between agnosticism and
hermeticism as opposed to Buddhism

well I'm no expert on gnosticism

genostism

or hermeticism

I watched an hour-long documentary on
hermeticism

on YouTube just recently by a guy who
apparently knew what he was talking
about but

still

um I really don't know that much about
it I really could not say for sure what
the difference is between genostism
which a lot of experts don't even like
anymore that they say agnosticism it

really

it's just sort of like this

this sort of a sloppy category that lots
of different systems got put into by
earlier Scholars and it's not
necessarily all that great of a of a
word

but um how do I differentiate between
gnosticism and hermeticism as opposed to
Buddhism well

gnosticism at least some Gnostic schools
they seem to think that like the world
is evil that flesh is evil

that you know it's like you gotta like
in a way kind of hate the world

and Buddhism it doesn't go that far I
mean you shouldn't have attraction or

aversion you just have mindful

acceptance

um you know there's a lot of Indian

ascetic ideals that kind of get through

the cracks so that in a way you're

supposed to despise the world or at

least despise it enough that you

renounce it get disillusioned with it at

least

gnosticism and hermeticism they're very

complicated Buddhism eventually became

very complicated with like abhidham and

the commentarial tradition but uh you

know just all this like agnosticism

there's all these different levels of

like eons and and

like Archangel kind of kind of beings
and so forth that uh in Buddhism it
acknowledges that higher beings exist
but there's no real emphasis put on them
you don't have to know about any of them
in order to become enlightened uh
gnosticism they seem to put more
emphasis on

on this elaborate cosmology that I mean
it did arise to some degree in Buddhism
but it was an incidental thing and to
some degree deviating from what the
Buddha Buddha was teaching

um gnosticism and hermeticism were
um they were like Greek philosophy that
was infused with a certain amount of
Judaism and Christianity

um and hermeticism especially would have
some a little bit of Egyptian religion
mixed in

but uh

yeah I do not I'm I'm unaware of

gnosticism or hermeticism uh generating
enlightened stages I mean there may have
been you know like maybe who was it uh
apollonius of Tiana although he may have
been a Pythagorean so he might not have
been agnostic or a hermeticist

but uh yeah I really don't know that
much about gnosticism or hermeticism to
really give like a
a really good explanation of the
differences between Buddhism and

narcissism and hermeticism although I think the the mysticism promoted by early Buddhism was of a higher order than the mysticism promoted by agnosticism which still has all this baggage that you know

I don't know that's just my impression someone who is an expert on gnosticism and hermeticism uh either or um might have a better grasp of of this question than I do so I'll just move on to the next one this is from grasshopper

and uh the second one from grasshopper this this one also is from Grasshopper

And he says you dislike Skittles in Western Buddhism but isn't the belief of

Buddhism itself still playing into their hands and I have to admit I do not understand this question very well and by Skittles I had to ask him what he meant and he was just being circumspect trying to avoid censorship on the internet and Skittles is just the rainbow of colors so he's talking about rainbow people in Western Buddhism and um I see I dislike Skittles in Western Buddhism well I don't know it's I for a gay person to be a Buddhist that's fine with me but it's it's the people that bother me with regard to that are the people that are just like

practically fixated on it where they're trying to just drag all this lgbtq stuff into Buddhist studies and they're just churning out papers about queer Buddhism and so forth

as though that was like a major emphasis or something

or it has become a major emphasis lately fairly obviously

um so there's that but then isn't the belief of Buddhism itself still playing into their hands and I'm not exactly sure what this means the belief of Buddhism itself playing into the hands of the rainbow people

um well I mean a lot of rainbow people they are adopting Buddhism as you know

it's like one of the least homophobic of
the traditional religions

um maybe Hinduism might be less

homophobic I mean homophobic than

Buddhism I mean Buddhism homophobia just

extends to the point of acknowledging

that gay men are more likely to be

sexually promiscuous and unrestrained

than heterosexual men

um and that's borne out by medical

journals and so forth I mean I've read

in a medical guy it was the mer guide

that uh it is not uncommon for a gay man

to have had more than 1 000 sexual

partners

and there aren't very many heterosexual

guys who have had that many sexual
partners

but let's see isn't the belief of
Buddhism itself still playing into the
hands I mean these like post-modern
leftists I mean just set aside the the
rainbow stuff

let's just go with postmodern leftism
which is where the rainbow people you
know gravitate

as a general rule

um you know they'll take an idea like
compassion

and then they'll say yeah there you see
Buddhism teaches compassion we're
Buddhists we're compassionate at least
for the people on our own side

and so I mean we shouldn't have
compassion for the people that aren't on
our own side because they're fascists
and evil or whatever I mean they
probably don't go that far out loud but
I mean You observe their behavior and
that tends to uh agree with their
attitude in a lot of cases anyway
so let's see

isn't the belief of Buddhism itself
still playing into their hands I I still
do not fully understand this question
playing into their hands
the belief of is it their belief of
Buddhism or is it just the the Creed of
Buddhism in general playing into their

hands and to some degree I mean just
like with regard to Compassion or
acknowledging that women become
enlightened too because they're
enlightened nuns in the texts something
like that but really I do not understand
this question well enough it's it's kind
of vaguely worded so that it could be
interpreted in other ways
but certainly Buddhism in the west has
been commandeered to some degree by
postmodern
neo-marxists who are essentially just
creating a kind of Buddhism flavored
neo-marxism
and then a lot of naive people who are
interested in Buddhism can't really tell

the difference they just think dhamma is
this neo-marxism with some Buddhist
jargon at it maybe some meditation as a
kind of stress relief because a lot of
them are pretty stressed out people
you know they can't really cope with
certain things very well so they use
meditation as a kind of tranquilizer or
something
not all of them of course but
lots of them
so I think I'll just uh move on to the
next question here this is from Tim the
enchanter
who also changes his name fairly
regularly at this point

there are some who call him Tim

and his question

is

the Buddha refused to answer if the

world is eternal or not but there is

General belief in Buddhism that the

samsara exists from Infinity past but

from mathematical point of view at least

time cannot exist from Infinity past

because if you divide it into individual

moments and we are in the present moment

we couldn't get here from the past

because past would be infinite there

would always be past moment and never

present moment maybe someone can explain

it in simpler words is belief in Eternal

universe or a series of universes

Orthodox taravada since the Buddha
refused to answer that question
um yeah there's there's a few things to
address here I mean this whole thing
reminds me of Zeno's Paradox
like

Achilles and the Tortoise I mean some of
you may be familiar with you got this
Turtle walking along an Achilles who's I
mean in the in the Iliad he's he's very
fast runner he can't catch up to the
tortoise because when he catches up to
where the tortoise was the tortoise has
already moved a little bit ahead and
then when Achilles catches up to where
the tortoise was the next time the

tortoises moved a little bit farther and
if there's going to be this infinite
number of times where Achilles gets to
where the the tortoise was but the
tortoise has moved just a little bit
farther

and I mean this is kind of like that I
mean why say that it's impossible
for for there to be a present moment if
there's an infinite pass when there can
be an infinite number of moments just in
the past second

you know this is like xeno's Paradox I
mean even one second can be divided up
into an infinite number
theoretically of moments

so

so yeah it's it's not really much of an argument it just points out that mathematics cannot deal with infinity that wherever you have Infinity there's going to be Paradox and you can prove all this weird stuff going with just simple proofs in mathematics and geometry and so forth like there's one cool one where it says that let's see a circle

it could be just like a microscopic Circle it'll have at twice as many points on its circumference than the line of infinite length and you can demonstrate this that you've got the circle you've got the line of infinite

length going into Infinity in both both
directions right so any point that goes
through the center of that Circle and
any on end any point on that line it's
going to go through the circle twice
there's going to be a point on the lower
half of the circle and a point on the
upper half of the circle just for any
point on that line
and so there you go the The Circle has
twice as many
points
on its circumference than a line that's
infinitely long and you can prove this I
mean you just demonstrate it but it's
it's
not likely to be correct because

with infinity the Mind cannot grasp it
and Mathematics cannot really cope with
it

there's always going to be these weird
paradoxes

and so

to say that the universe couldn't be
infinite

it with regard to time

because

well I mean there would have to be an
infinite number of of moments had

already passed and you I don't know it's
it's weird I mean you might as well say

that it can't be infinite in space

either for the same reason

disregard to our position in space and
our position in time

but uh so there's that I mean that's
just like a weird quirk in in the human
incapacity to cope with with infinity
which has gone back to like Xeno and his
paradoxes and so forth at the very
latest

so uh

let's see what's the other part here oh
it's like is belief an eternal universe
or series of universes Orthodox terabado
since the Buddha refused to answer that
question well he refused to answer that
question and then like there's one weird
suit towards the end of the Deegan ikaya
where the Buddha is just talking about

the origin of the universe and how you know it happens over and over again the cosmos expanding and Contracting and the first thing that the first thing that appears in the material universe is the Throne of Maha Brahma and then Brahma materializes and then he starts getting lonely because he's all by himself and then other brahmas around him start materializing due to their own Karma but he thinks that it's because of his desire that caused them to materialize and then he believes himself to be this Creator God and so forth

um

so I mean the Buddha refuses to answer

whether the cosmos is infinite or finite

he won't answer either way

um but then in other sutas he just goes

for it and gives all this Buddhist

cosmology stuff which is questionable

um

but I mean you might as well just say

you know the the beginning is unknown

and just leave it at that

just be cool with be cool with ambiguity

that's a sign of wisdom

being cool with Paradox and ambiguity in

in just the human situation with regard

to interpreting reality and so forth

so I don't know if I answered that

question very well

Tim the enchanter may be unimpressed by

that answer but I'm just going to move
on to his next question here
and his next question is do you consider
a lot of people

NPCs in some sense and this is with
regard to the thumbnail of my previous q
a and my sweetheart made that q a or
made that that thumbnail as a meme

years ago I mean it was before before I
came to South Carolina I think that she
made that meme

as a kind of joke and then she just
decided to turn it into a thumbnail for
the last q a

um but it has a lot of

uh it's like a scene from Star Trek but

this the episode The Trouble with Tribbles it's the old Star Trek and there's these Tribbles these little furry animals that they're born pregnant and they just reproduce you know more than more than bunnies do they reproduce like Tribbles and uh so she replaced the Tribbles with these NPC heads and a few heads of me mixed in with the eyes glowing uh it was just kind of a joke meme but

do I consider a lot of people NPCs in some sense yeah in some sense a lot of people are just superficial normies that just assumed this is a reality and they get their opinions and

beliefs from

just from outside themselves like from

the media you know they get it from

Rachel Maddow of all people or they just

get it from social media or they get it

from Just who they're working with and

hanging out with all the time you know

their their fan certain family members

you know back in the days of TV they'd

get their values from TV game shows and

talk shows and crime dramas that was

that was my mother actually

um

so I mean they're not going to be

complete NPCs

because I mean there's there's gonna

have to be at least a little spark there
but like a spark of life
you know they're not just gonna be
automatons

um although like a lot of scientific
materialists would say in a sense we're
all just automatons

but um

yeah it's a relative thing it's not just
some people are NPCs and the rest of us
aren't

um it's just sort of a spectrum that is
more npc-like at one end and just more
I don't know what what the other end
will be enlightened maybe or just uh
completely spontaneous and creative and
in the moment instead of just locked

into this set of beliefs that have been
programmed indoctrinated into you

so

yeah the answer to that one is yeah sort
of with qualifications so we'll just

move on to Tim the enchanter's next

question here and Tim the enchanter is

my favorite guy in Monty Python and the

Holy Grail just just putting that out

there he's like my favorite character in

the whole movie

cute little bunny isn't it

so let's see here what are your thoughts

on epicure's statement that one of the

most high Pleasures in life is spiritual

friendship yeah I would agree with that

I mean it's not the most intense Joy
probably but it's
you know it's sort of an exalted kind of
of happiness
just having a spiritual communion or
companionship with another person who
you know their their
wise you know they're helping you
helping you to be wise and
yeah I mean it's it's a good thing
it definitely is
so I would agree
and I think I'll just move on to the
next question here this is also from Tim
the enchanter hey you he starts how
would you translate literally the phrase
from the gotika suta which is

I should say

Kuma

and then especially I want to know if

Buddha is praised here for abandoning or

relinquishing fear or something else

thanks well as it turned out I

translated the entire gorika suta I've

got it here in my book

essays and terrible Buddhism

and

my literal translation of what I just

told you in poly is great hero great in

understanding blazing with power and

Glory gone beyond all enmity and fear

endowed with a vision I worship at your

feet and this is from Mara so according

to the story you've got a monk named
gotika who's living at isigiri Cave at
the black the Black Rock isigiri cave
and he's meditating intensively and he
keeps getting Jonah and losing it and
getting it and losing it and getting it
and losing it until finally the next
time he's got Jonna he's gonna commit
suicide because he figures if he dies
with Janna he's guaranteed of a Brahma
realm a very high heaven realm but if he
dies without Jonah there's no saying
there's no guarantee so he's just gonna
cut his own throat with his razor
and Mara the evil one you know the
Buddhist devil he doesn't want godica to
become enlightened so he runs to the

Buddha and he's he's buttering up the
Buddha he's like praising the Buddha
this

like he's he's laying it on thick he's
spreading it thick because he's trying
to get the Buddha to stop gaurica from
committing suicide

so

he's just praising the Buddha and just
trying to get the Buddha to think that
Mara is kind of on his side so that
he'll talk out of committing suicide but
it's already too late and go to cat
already cut his own throat and became
enlightened at the moment of death
so too many enchanter here is asking

especially I want to know
if Buddha is praised here for abandoning
or relinquishing fear or something else
well he's obviously praised and he's
he's abandoned you know just fear and
enmity and everything he's just
Transcendent because he's fully
enlightened he's the Buddha and Mara is
probably insincerely
just praising him in grandiose terms
um in order to get the Buddha to stop
godica from from committing suicide
but it doesn't work
so I'll just uh move on to the next
question here
which is from Crave minerals
or just crave for short

see here I'm scrolling back up again I
make sure I answered Timmy and chandra's
question about Mara
praising the Buddha okay so crave
minerals says I wanted to ask if you
could speak out about what the karma of
art is according to Buddhism as a
moderately successful artist I wonder
what kind of karma is made through this
profession

I remember reading asuta where the
Buddha begrudgingly told an actor that
he would end up in the hell of laughter
in some mutant nikaya 42 2 the tala puta
suta this makes me think that the safest
or most beneficial thing to do would be

to make only Buddha pictures not
provocative or inflammatory Expressions
at all I would assume however that one's
intent has a role in this do you have
any Reflections on this matter thank you
well I think the reason why the Buddha
said that actors go to hell is mainly
because actors are
they're like in reinforcing some sorrow
you know they're getting people into a
samsaric mental state you know by
telling this story that never really
happened or
um you know it's just it's sort of like
helping to Anchor them in samsara but
some art I think
um is actually dharmic art like for

example

um the movie stalker by tarkovsky it's a
a Russian movie

from back in the Soviet days I mean
that's a work of art

but also it's it's spiritual it's sort
of uplifting it's it's it's sort of
helping people to understand

you know spirituality in a way or like
Dostoevsky I mean he was

um a novelist but I think fiction would
qualify as art also or the movie Avalon
it's uh it's a science fiction movie but
it's also like a metaphor for
enlightenment

um also when I I mentioned that Avatar

is a metaphor for enlightenment it's a
it's a Japanese movie filmed in Poland
with Polish actors

um but it's it's a metaphor for
enlightenment it can help people to
understand Enlightenment

um I think a lot of art like like
painting I mean if it has the same sort
of effect or like Hieronymus Bosch well
that one that one about the Imperium I
can't remember the the the the full name
where it's you know it's got the person
floating up into the bright light you
know after he dies you know something
like that something that's like
uplifting
and kind of helps you to detach or at

least understand some sorrow a little better

um I think that that would be more of a positive thing that you wouldn't go to hell for actually helping people to understand drama or to uplift them and make them a little wiser

so

um yeah with the guard do it'd be a little more difficult with like plastic Arts like painting and sculpture than it would with when you're telling a story that can be a spiritual story painting a spiritual painting or making a spiritual um sculpture would be trickier because um I mean the amount you're able to say

is limited by you know you just got one canvas or just one piece of clay or one piece of stone or whatever

but uh I do think it's possible there's a lot of religious art I'm more familiar with the Western religious art but I mean like El Greco he he painted a lot of spiritual stuff I mean a lot of the Renaissance Masters I mean they're just painting scenes out of the Bible or whatever which isn't necessarily uplifting you know it could just be some sardonic you know you just kind of locked into you know people and Landscapes and so forth which wouldn't be particularly helpful but um maybe something more surreal or

something that kind of loosens your grip
on some sorrow you know on a
materialistic world or it just has some
sort of

some kind of uplifting

um

message

and I do think that's possible I don't
even think that all actors necessarily
go to hell although probably a lot of
them do assuming that there is such a
place as hell

so

I think

I think I answered that question I think
I'll just move on to the next question

here and this is from Bill Gahan or is
Matt

and Bill Gahan or ismet says if I
remember correctly you said path press
refused publishing your books because
you criticized Nana Vera in one of your
articles in your old blog I couldn't
find the article since your old blog is
gone is there a way I can read that
article if not can you share your
criticisms I believe it'd be beneficial
for my study of the dhamma well as it
turns out
that that exact essay is in this same
book where my translation of the garika
suta is which is essays in terrible
Buddhism writings of an incendiary

Buddhist monk

and uh you can get this on Amazon and

it's the the second chapter

let's see here

let's see

yeah the second chapter

wait a minute

yeah notes on mysticism with respect to

venerable nyanovira I don't know if you

can see that there it is

somewhere up towards the top because

it's the second chapter

and the main thing I was criticizing and

and this

um this question here

the setting for this question isn't

entirely accurate

um

past press I mean it was

set up by followers of Nana Vera that

nanovir has way more followers now that

he's been dead for

gosh close to 50 years then he had when

he was alive

that he was extremely intellectual so

extremely intellectual monks and and

Buddhist lay people really like

neonavira and he was a rationalist

and like any rationalist you have to

start with something that is not

rational and then build your logic on

that I mean eventually you have to have

fundamental premises that are not

logically proven you have to have axioms
and

Nona Vera he went with the core texts he
knew that abidama was not composed by
the Buddha

but he he took like cortex you know the
first four nikayas the first several
books of the fifth nikaya the first four
books of winnia and he just said these
are 100 accurate totally reliable
teachings of the Buddha and then he was
an existentialist

and I mean he was just before he became
a monk he was really into the
existentialist philosophy which was a
big deal back you know in the 1950s and

60s and you know he's going on and on
about like Kierkegaard he's reading lots
of Kierkegaard and um
he he just hated mysticism
see he he thought that mysticism just
violates the laws of thought you know
something has to be either a or not a
and mysticism is saying well sometimes
something can be both a and not a you
know like like the Mahayana Buddhist
saying that that Nirvana and samsara are
the same even though they're different
and so forth and he just hated that I
mean sometimes just to call someone a
Mystic was enough I mean it was like
that was it you can just dispense with
that person because they're a Mystic and

so I wrote this article pointing out why
I think Nana Vera was mistaken
and I Unearthed this rare uh
pseudo

platonic document where a sophist is
debating with this this rube

and I won't I won't repeat it I mean you
can you can read the book it's it is
available on Amazon

but I was demonstrating how the laws of
thought don't fully apply like I went
with with a pop bottle a coke bottle
that but let's just use this glass this
glass of sweet tea

ah so this is

this is glass it's 100 glass but it's

also a beverage container so it's like
the substance is glass but this is a bad
choice because it's also a glass
so let's go with something else here
let's go with this jar
this this is a glass jar
forget the cap let's take the cap off
okay

glass jar so this is 100 glass but it's
also a jar so does that mean that glass
and jar are the same
no glass in jar are not the same you can
have a plastic jar you can have
something that's made of glass that
isn't a jar so glass and jar are not
synonyms they don't mean the same thing
so glass is different from jar jar is

different from glass but this is 100 jar
and 100 glass at the same time so it's a
and not a simultaneously
and that violates the laws of thought
because you can't have something be a
and not a simultaneously but this jar is
doing it

so I was using an argument along those
lines to demonstrate that
um none of Vera's hatred is just he just
utterly despised Mississippi he's
completely locked into intellectuality
which he was like the scholar amongst
ajan chal was talking about he
considered himself to have become an
Arya but why when he considered himself

to become an Arya he was philosophizing
while walking back and forth and then it
just clicked it was like it his theories
just kind of fell into this coherent
system that pleased him so much
apparently he believed that he had
become an Arya by this thinking his way
to uh

to to being a soda Palmer just hammering
out views which is not encouraging the
text but I'm sure he was very
intelligent and so he would be able to
rationalize what he had done
so

yeah if you really want to to know my my
critique the original critique
um

it's in this book which is available on Amazon but um it's not entirely true that path press refused to publish my books because I criticized Nana Vera that was just the first thing I did that put them kind of on their back heels you know it's kind of like whoa and then and then I continued writing stuff on my blog that just was more and more infuriating to them for example I had just come back to America and I was just I was supported at least as much by new age people as by Buddhists especially my first my first year my first several months in America in Bellingham Washington

and I was

surrounded by these new age females and

and also New Age men who were just sort

of feminine in their thinking you know

very compassion heart oriented and

everything and I wasn't really used to

it

and so I was sort of experimenting with

it just kind of working out the

philosophical ramifications of of a

heart-oriented Buddhism because I'm more

of a head-oriented person and

just like putting emphasis on the heart

orientation as equally valid to a head

orientation again these followers of

janovira they just they just did not

like that at all they're like accusing

me of just selling out and becoming a new age person or something and I don't know it's the more I wrote the less they liked of me and so they actually did start to publish my otakawaga translation and then after it was already published and they had even distributed it to ajah monasteries and then finally they just sent out this letter just apologizing for having done that and and the the atikawaga translations weren't distributed so yeah I was I was kind of uh a rascally monk at times I was controversial I was a controversial Monk which uh

makes it I'm sure a lot of Buddhists
would just consider that me dropping out
and becoming a layperson was probably a
good idea

so I'll just move on to the next
question here

and even though we didn't have a whole
lot of questions I'm filling in the gaps
here and stretching this out to another
two hour long one just through my uh
profuse

digressions and uh

other other verbiage

so this one's from rui oh and also throw
in that five minutes where I'm trying to
find the place in the Tibetan book of
the great Liberation this is from rui

and rui says hello panabasa I often think that Buddha dama offers a possibility to circumvent entirely the Troubles of philosophy particularly in its modern post-modern and utterly confusing iterations maybe this is also the meaning of taking Refuge any thoughts well I mean if you're following like primitive Buddha dhama like archaic Buddha dama like in the otakawaga where you're not supposed to have any beliefs any perceptions you know you're not supposed to believe anything then yeah I mean philosophy is out the window I mean there is no philosophy at that point

um

maybe just a Teensy bit of philosophy in
not philosophizing you know sort of
saying I shouldn't philosophize
um shouldn't believe anything shouldn't
perceive anything you know that in
itself could be a kind of very simple
philosophy but um
yeah it's like I was going to major in
philosophy when I was when I went to
college and just two or three classes in
philosophy cured me of that idea because
in order to make a name for yourself in
Western philosophy you have to disagree
with everyone everybody else
and so it's so confusing at first for a
young person you know you're 18 years
old and you just everyone is is saying

something else you know everyone is
disagreeing with each other
and it's just very confusing it just it
just didn't work for me it wasn't until
I got older that I was able to start
reading western philosophy with a
certain amount of grounding and
confidence so that I wasn't just utterly
bemused and Confused
so yeah Buddha dhama can circumvent
entirely the Troubles of philosophy
um

maybe this is also the meaning of taking
Refuge well it's certainly not the main
meaning of taking Refuge I mean it could
be I mean if that's your orientation

but taking Refuge is sort of like you
found a guide that can help you to
liberate yourself or at least become
wiser and better and so you're taking
refuge in this guide who is kind of
protecting you from from harming
yourself in certain ways

um

so yeah I mean it can't include that but
it's certainly not limited to that
so I'll just move on to rui's second
question here

which is WB Yates is known to have said
that poetry is the social Act of the
solitary man could we also say that
adhering to the dhamma is the social Act
of the solitary man

um it's not very social if you're
solitary I mean if you're if you're
writing poetry then I mean you're kind
of making a social Act of other people
in society read your poetry but just
following dharma it's not really a social
act it seems to me

I mean you could interpret it that way
especially if following the dhamma has
some social ramifications I mean in a
way if you're still not entirely
solitary you know you're still riding on
buses with other people around you
walking down sidewalks you know maybe
even working in a job or something that
even though you keep to yourself

um that there's going to be a certain
light shining out of you or a certain
glow or just sort of a uplifting effect
on others through osmosis because mental
states are contagious
so uh so long as you're not totally
solitary but then all of a sudden I'm
reminded of something that that um John
of the Saint John of the Cross said and
that was that you got one person who is
just spending his life to feeding the
hungry and clothing the the people that
don't have clothes and finding homes for
the homeless and tending the sick and
just just serving others just
single-mindedly just self selflessly
serving others doing as much good as you

possibly can you got one person doing
that the other person is sitting alone
in a state of high contemplation just
like in Jannah

and then he says that second person
who's not lifting a finger to to feed
the hungry or or tend the sick or
anything

even but he is because he is like in the
state of high contemplation he's
actually helping the world more than the
first person and The Diamond Cutter

Sutra says something similar I mean on
the one hand you can just
feed I mean you can do all the stuff
that I said with regard to St John of

the Cross you can do all these
meritorious Deeds just you know helping
helping people all day long on the other
hand you can just Master One verse of
The Diamond Cutter Sutra and you're
actually doing more good
by doing that and uh in a way it's like
by increasing your wisdom even though
you're not interacting with other people
you're sort of raising the the
consciousness of the planet
so yeah that could be a social act you
could say that practicing dama not
necessarily adhering to it so much but
practicing it is as a social Act of the
Solitary Man to the extent that you are
raising the level of consciousness of

the entire planet

in your in some small way maybe

but if you manage to get enlightened

then you're hoping the world a great

deal

so

that would be my answer to that one I'll

just move on to the next question here

this is from zinch

I think that's how you

t-z-e-e-n-c-h zinge

man that reminds me of Dr Zeus it's like

some kind of strange creature in a Dr

Zeus story but I don't I don't want to

make fun of obscene chair I'm sure he's

very nice

and he says or she

zinch

says wouldn't the thing you've hurt your

toe upon considered something you're

swearing at like you're angry and it's a

bad mental state and furthermore your

Furious exclamation is still targeted at

something does it make so much

difference to not be considered a

violation I'm sorry if it's an easy or

dumb question my interests are mainly

abrahamic theology so I'm not too

experienced in eastern you really do

help me understand that feel upon your

Bossa thank you well you're welcome and

I just know this is the very last

question Mike golly

it just sneaks up on me sometimes

so

he's referring to a question that I answered in the previous q a about how harsh speech isn't really harsh speech unless you're directing it at somebody and they're hearing it you know like if you just stub your toe and say [__] you know it's it's in the dark you stub your toe on the on the table leg it hurts [__] this comes out of your mouth that that is not harsh speech because harsh speech has to be directed to somebody you're using hard speech to belittle somebody insult somebody make them feel bad

and when you're just saying [_] because
when you're all alone in the dark and
you stubbed your toe I mean it doesn't
really apply it similar with lying this
is with regard to like wrong speech in
general with regard to lying you have to
be lying to somebody you have to have
the intention to deceive somebody
that that is I mean
you see it so much in like social media
where somebody's saying oh you're that's
a lie because it's not true but just
because you see something that isn't
true doesn't mean that you're lying a
kid gets a question wrong on his math
test he doesn't get punished when he
gets home for lying because he wrote the

wrong answer because he was an honest
mistake

and so in order to really lie you have
to have the intention to deceive
somebody

and it's the same with our speech if
you're just using cuss words but they're
not directed at somebody for the sake of
making them feel bad hurting their
feelings or whatever then then again

it's not harsh speech so he's to zinch
here is asking wouldn't the thing you've
hurt your toe upon be considered
something that you're swearing at so uh
you're using harsh speech at the table
the table leg that you just stubbed your

toe on still it's not a conscious being
it doesn't hear what you're saying it
doesn't give a damn what you're saying
you're not really trying to hurt the
feelings of the table
when you're when you say [__] when you
stubbed your toe on the table leg
so it is true I mean you can be in a bad
mental state you know there's like this
flare-up of Dosa or anger and that's on
you but it's not the words coming out of
your mouth it's just the mental state of
the irritation the annoyance or whatever
and yeah I mean that would that would be
an unwholesome mental state
but it can happen automatically and so
long as you're not following along with

it you know as long as you're not
wallowing in it it's it's pretty much
karmically neutral like like Saint John
of the Cross would say the same thing if
a thought arises in your mind just
spontaneously of its own accord and it's
it's a negative thought or something
still you haven't done anything wrong
because it's just spontaneous I mean you
weren't planning on having the thought
come up it just came up
but if you like take that thought and
continue with it then you're doing
something wrong
so I mean if you really just get pissed
off at the table and just start hitting

it or I mean people can get really angry
at inanimate objects I've I've gotten
really angry at inanimate objects you
know like something isn't working the
way it's supposed to work and you just
smash you just throw it or something
you're in a really bad mood you have a
really bad day I mean that sort of thing
has happened with me before and it's not
that you're hurting like a tool that
isn't working properly you know it's
it's not that you're abusing the tool in
such a way that you're trying to hurt
its feelings or anything it's just the
the anger that arises is is the
unskillful mental state and that's
that's pretty much it

so again with regard to wrong speech you have to have another person hearing your wrong speech and being negatively affected by it being deceived or insulted or or just having their mind poisoned against somebody else that that has to happen in order for it to qualify as wrong speech in an ethical sense in Buddhism but just setting all that the wrong speech aside just being angry or irritated you know

um

even like you're driving your car somebody cuts you off you know you almost get in a wreck because somebody I just acted like an imbecile and I mean

you can cuss at them and again you're not really engaging in abusive or harsh speech because they can't hear you they don't care

but still you've got the unwholesome mental states of the anger and just the the hostility the ill will maybe that that would be like Bad Karma you know that would be unwholesome mental States on your part

so I think I just answered all the questions mom and so

that's it and if you have any more questions and I assume some of you do some of you are like inexhaustible Fountains of questions which is good because that's why I'm here

and it helps other people too because a lot of people are just too shy to ask a question and then if you ask the same question that they're thinking of then you're helping them too or maybe they didn't even occur to them to ask that question and they learned something or something

so if you have any questions especially about Buddhism Eastern philosophy a little bit of Western philosophy um Burma being a monk that kind of a thing anything that you think that I can answer intelligently or at least entertainingly uh feel free to ask in the comments below if you have access to

the Discord server you can ask them
there if you have access to my subscribe
star you can ask them there
and uh look at the URL links and my
books are indeed for sale on Amazon
including
the one with uh my critique of niana
Vera
so with that I will just say be happy

hello and welcome to episode 60 of
question and answer I'm your host Ponyo
Basa

and this q a is in some respects going
to resemble the previous q a because
I've got the same sort of
Saturday hangover from working all week
very hard in 90 degree 90 degree weather
so it's like Saturday I just kind of go
into wet rag lying on the couch mode but
The Show Must Go On
yeah

and I'm actually drinking coffee
and generally what happens is I start
off maybe a little low energy but then
the flow of Dharma flowing through my

body and out my mouth while I answer
questions just kind of
if it doesn't perk me up at least it
makes me more awake
or something

so we've got uh kind of the standard
sort of large number of questions
although it's not nearly as large as the
episode number which is 60. it's just
amazing to me that I've done 60 of these
already

so anyway I'll start answering questions
now because that's why we're here
and the first question is from macubo I
think it's called I think he is called I
didn't refer to makubo as it mind you
and makubo says

like you and many of your subscribers I am opposed to the ideas of the transgender movement which I find to be contradictory and repressive can you please elaborate on your criticism of transgenderism as I understand it the gender critical approach is based on biological materialism in that sex is immutable and binary and the concept of gender identity is reminiscent of a gendered soul

however as someone who has been critical of materialism and scientism as well as having a background as a biologist how do you justify your position do your views differ from the Orthodox terabonda

position on the matter

well

um to tell you the truth I mean at the beginning here it says like you and many of your subscribers I am opposed to the ideas of the transgender movement

um was regarding transgender people

like for example I've I've mentioned

this before that in Burma which is a

very traditionalist very Buddhist

country there's quite a few transgender

people

I think they're called gandu or at least

the the biological men who identify as

women are called gandu in Burmese and

they dress like women they do their hair

like women they act like women they take

they adopt like a female name and I mean they can be out in remote Villages you know mainly subsistence farmers in these villages

and they are accepted mainly because Buddhism accepts the idea of rebirth and Buddhism also accepts the idea that um someone who is male in their previous life can be female in this life or vice versa

and so the idea is that you've got say a woman she was a woman in her previous life and then she's born into a male body due to whatever karma in this life but still the momentum has been largely female and so this person still

has many feminine traits and may feel
more feminine than masculine
and I really don't have a problem with
that I can kind of I can accept the idea
of rebirth and like transitioning where
it's it's not like you're a completely
feminine female in one life and then the
next life you're completely macho guy
you know there's going to be like a
transition that might take two or three
lives or maybe just the the experiment
with being the the other gender doesn't
work out and then they go back to to the
other gender that they're more used to
or whatever
so that kind of thing I'm not really
I'm not like vehemently opposed to

transgender people but what I am opposed to is just the policing of language where you can get arrested for stating your honest opinion that that's actually a guy that thinks he's a woman or identifies as a woman but um I mean to be arrested for that or to lose your career for that I mean that's just getting into gender fascism I think fascism in the negative sense that is so I think people do have the right to follow their conscience and to speak the truth um as well as they are able and if one person definitely believes for example that Caitlyn Jenner is still a

guy

I think he should have the right to say
that publicly

so that's really the main issue I've got
um and still like

like transgender individuals in sports
you notice it's always one way you don't
have

um a person who was a female who
transitions to male and then starts
breaking all kinds of Records in male
Athletics it just doesn't happen I've
never heard of a single case of that
unless I heard of

like a transgender guy who was
biologically female doing well in some
kind of sport that women generally do

well in but I can't even remember what
it was it was like diving or something
so

I mean that that just makes sense
biological males are stronger they got
larger longer bones you know they got
more lung capacity more red blood cells
you know they're just designed for
exertion more than females are in the
human species you have
what's it called

dimorphism sexual dimorphism and I'm
glad I'm glad that people aren't all the
same like crows you know you can't look
at a crow you can't tell if it's a boy
Crow or a girl Crow I don't know how the

crows even figure it out just through

Behavior I guess

so

I think was regard to transgender

individuals I think some people can

genuinely feel as though they are a man

trapped in a woman's body or a woman

trapped in a man's body I think that

they would be better off like happier in

the long run if they just accept that

they happen to be in the body of the

other gender instead of getting

themselves surgically adjusted sort of

to make them look like they're the other

gender when biologically they're still

the gender that they began as that they

were born as

but uh so my main objection is just
shoving it down people's throats and
forcing them to use the correct pronouns
or the correct pronouns

so or just letting biological males who
suck at their sport you know they what
was this um the swimmer I can't remember
the person's name they were in something
they were like less than 500th place in
males swimming just overall in the
rankings

then they start identifying as a female
and boom they're right at the top

so I mean I don't think that's fair I
think

um

um yeah if not I think

like sports councils

I guess they're called Sports councils

they have the right to uh prevent

transgender individuals from depriving

women of the right to

compete against other women instead of a

guy who calls himself a woman

but uh

aside from that I mean biologically I

mean you're male or female I mean there

are a few you know you got like

kleinfelter syndrome where you where

somebody's got two x's and a y

something like that or you know

hermaphrodites that sort of thing which

would be called panduka

um mostly they'd be called pandika or
panduka in Pali like ancient Indian
Buddhist lingo

they wouldn't be considered fully male
or fully female

but I'm not exactly sure how abhidham
deals with it because

here's part of the question here at the
bottom do your views differ from the
Orthodox terrible position on the matter
um according to Orthodox theravana they
have the strange idea that maleness and
femaleness is femaleness are ultimate
truth they are ultimately real

and that my body for example is made up
of these Rupa calapas which are sort of

like little molecules composed of
clusters of ultimately real Damas and
one of those ultimately real Damas in my
my molecular makeup I guess you could
call it my Rupa colopal makeup is
masculinity trons
so it's like you can identify as a
female but
I mean you're still going to be
ultimately
absolutely male based on these little
masculine neutrons in your genetic or
your
um you know the the little particles
that compose your body one of those
particles one of the ultimately real
forms of matter according to the

hobbydama philosophy is masculinity and
another one is feminine and you're just
stuck with that you can identify however
you please

but any kind of identifying is going to
be delusional because we really do not
have a discrete ultimately real identity
anyway

so

so let's see I'm gonna I'm gonna read
through the sentence this this question
or a little cluster of questions one
more time just to make sure that I
answer makubo's question because I he
might be offended because it sounded
like maybe I call him it so I I use the

wrong pronoun

so like you and many of your subscribers

I'm opposed to the ideas of the

transgender movement well I'm I guess

I'm a I don't follow along with some of

the ideas of the transgender movement I

can accept that

you know there can be a sort of like a

karmic transitional state but you know

along a number of lives where somebody

is transitioning or they've been mostly

male in their past lives and then they

happen to be female in this life and

they've got a lot of male momentum going

that sort of thing I can accept that

so he says can you please elaborate on

your criticism of transgenderism which

I'm pretty sure I've done pretty well
kind of

and see as I understand it the gender
critical approach is based on biological
materialism

for me the gender critical approach is
based on not so much on how people
identify

um or whether they their bodies are
biologically male or female that's
pretty that's it's like for me it's the
coercion of forcing people or just sort
of luring them sheep-like into believing
that I mean it's just wrong to call a
trend like
a literally a female

that they are really a female that men
can menstruate men can get pregnant all
this stuff

um yeah I think that's that's pushing it
okay so let's see uh however as someone
who has been critical of materialism and
scientism that's me as well as having a
background in biologist still me how do
you justify your position okay yeah it's
through mainly through Buddhism

um from a biological point of view
unless you have some sort of genetic
abnormality then you're going to be male
or female based upon your your DNA your
chromosomes and someone can identify as
a woman and maybe they could be accepted
as a woman especially if they resemble a

woman

but uh I mean requiring people

to

believe that they really are women and

and at least talking as though they

really believe which would make them

dishonest if they are forced to to talk

this way yeah that's that's overdoing it

and the

the Athletics thing I've already

mentioned and see do your views differ

from the Orthodox here about a position

yeah I do not agree with with abhidham I

do not think that physical matter is

ultimately real much less

that masculinity or femininity are

ultimate realities

so I'll just move on to the next

question here

and this is from the Arya sawasti

project

in the Arya swasti project says

I'm having trouble with there is no self

and that there is nothing can we say

that nothing is permanent that

everything is in a state of change but

to say to get rid of suffering is to get

rid of the self is a different concept

maybe an expansion of self that the self

is in everything else maybe not trying

to argue with the Buddha but it seems

kind of like a dead end description also

do you think a lot of folks are turned

away from Buddhism because of the
concept of no self and how it is
presented my apologies as I know this
has been addressed in other ways before
I'd still like to hear your fresh take
on it sondu

oh

okay so this is also a sort of like a
little cluster of questions here
see he starts I'm having trouble with
there is no self and that there is
nothing

um

the whole there is nothing there are a
few sutas especially in the parayana
Wagga of the sutiny Pata where the

Buddha advises people to remind themselves there is nothing or it is not naughty naughty which is sort of like native in in the upanishads and seeing everything as void seeing everything is empty

but

um it's it's sort of ridiculous to assert that there's absolutely nothing because obviously there's there's stuff there's something

so it's it's more of

I would consider that to be a kind of uh yogic technique

as a way of combating your beliefs in these ultimately real discrete entities so yeah I would consider that to be like

a yogic practice or a a yogic like
attitude to adopt as skillful means but
Orthodox carobada certainly does not say
that there is nothing in reality because
as I said the Orthodox hero bottle
including abhidham
says even masculinity and femininity are
alternate realities
nothing to let alone knows sensitivity
and tongue sensitivity and eye
sensitivity and just all sorts of things
so
let's see can we say that nothing is
permanent that everything is in a state
of change that would be the Orthodox
terravana position

see but to say to get rid of suffering
is to get rid of the self is a difficult
concept well I mean there is no self to
get rid of that's a that's a kind of
misconception it's a common
misconception you don't get rid of
suffering by getting rid of the self
it'd be more like you get rid of
suffering by getting rid of the clinging
to the the idea of self I mean mine
so see maybe an expansion of self yeah I
mean I've discussed this before that
we're dealing with the absolute we're
and the absolute is off the scale you
know it's it's not is or isn't
and
with regard to the absolute most

spiritual systems go with is and they'll call it God where they'll call it Brahman or they'll call it Dao you know they'll give it this name and it's this is the absolute which is really turning you into a song Sorry concept so in a way they're just sort of defiling it or degrading it into just more samsara and they're really not getting past that so Buddhism it takes the the other invalid approach because neither is nor isn't is really valid it's just a dualistic concept so Buddhism goes the other way and says there is no self instead of like the upanishadic idea that it's all self that

self the self is God it just pervades
everything you know like salt in in salt
water you know as just as uh the water
is pervaded by the taste of salt even so
the entire universe is pervaded by the
Atman which is God

and to say is is sort of going off the
track this way and to say isn't is going
off the track that way and originally
what Buddhism was teaching is the middle
path between is and isn't there's

there's lots of middle paths I mean the
most famous one is the middle path
between self-indulgence and self-torture
but there's other middle paths including
the middle path between the absolute
exists and the absolute doesn't exist

because it totally transcends The
Duality of is and isn't existence and
non-existence

so let's see here

also do you think a lot of folks are
turned away from Buddhism because of the
concept of no self and how it is
presented mostly in the West

yeah a lot of westerners just vehemently
dislike the whole idea of no self and
it's mostly a Westerner thing I've never
really come across Asian Buddhists who
just vehemently is sometimes angrily
hotly insist that there is an eternal
soul

an eternal absolutely real self

um but then again in the west we have
more options than in a traditionalist
country like Burma

a traditionalist and conformist country
like Burma so in the west I mean you can
study the world religions you have
access to all this information and you
can you pay as your money and you take
your choice

and we tend to be eclectic I mean I'm
obviously eclectic you know I don't just
adhere strictly to Theravada Buddhism I'm
willing to accept the wisdom from
wherever I can find it

so

yeah my apologies okay so that's that
was his questions

so yeah a lot of folks in the west are turned away because the West is more individualistic than the West is more self-oriented and also the West is more eclectic and you have access to more information and you can just pick and choose like many different religions in the west

um I mean just just look at the different different number of Christian denominations in the west I mean there's lots of them

and so you can just pick and choose a lot of people just follow along with the way they were raised what their parents followed you

know what their their neighbors their
friends and family follow you know it's
just a traditionalist kind of a thing
but a lot of westerners

um you know they'll just go the other
way you know they don't want to conform
but uh they like the idea of the self
and so they like ideas in Buddhism
uh they don't want to be vedantist
Hindus

you know they don't want to be
Christians maybe they just can't believe
Christianity is kind of my my situation
and so they just take Buddhism and just
try to tweak it or change it or like
some people do they'll go to the
polytext and start tweaking and like

adjusting the meaning of the poly text
trying to force self-view into the poly
texts and um that's that's worse than
just saying Buddhism teaches that there
is no self but I would prefer to believe
that there is one

but I mean if you really want something
like Buddhism that does accept an
eternal self

vedantis Hindu is similar I mean
vedantist Hinduism and especially like
majamaka Mayana Buddhism there is a lot
of blending and overlap they were
borrowing ideas from each other largely
because they were like debating with
each other and so they're having to like

strengthen their own position against
the other guy's arguments and so forth
which um it caused them to become
similar in certain ways although vedanta
does assert the existence of an absolute
which is Brahman and the Atman

excuse me

but if I talk more about majama I'm
gonna have to put on the majama confess
which is gonna happen before this video
is over so I give fair warning this is
sort of like a trigger warning if
anyone's triggered by fez's
it's gonna happen there's going to be a
fez before this video is over
so I think I've answered that one
I mean you don't get rid of the self you

get rid of this

belief that you are this distinct

ultimately real self

and But ultimately I mean self I mean

ultimately you want to get to what I

consider to be the Buddha's original

teachings self is invalid no self is

invalid but in order to use human

language you've got to pick one or the

other in order to talk about it most

systems go with there is one Buddhism

picked there isn't one and to some

degree the idea of no self it's it's

less prone to abuse because then you

stop clinging to this idea that you're

gonna be going into heaven with your

same body and your same personality and
I mean it's like you are Immortal in a
sense

and that is not the case

that even I mean the more advanced
spiritual systems that say that there is
a self they equate that self with the
absolute you know they have the yourself
is just the Ultimate Reality upon which
this illusion of your self is based
and that's God or Brahman or whatever
the Dharma Kaya

so I hope I answered that question
but these kind of questions and these
are the questions that get asked a lot
are questions that there is no
satisfying intellectual conceptual

answer because the truth

transcends Concepts transcends the

intellect

you know it's like is and isn't are both

invalid what what can you say

so

I think I'll just move on to the next

question here this is from keep the

vinia

and keep the vinya says do you advise

against becoming a monk in Sri Lanka I

think you said in one of your videos

that the monks there are more corrupt

and then in other Buddhist countries and

the advantage of Sri Lanka but the

advantage of Sri Lanka is that many

people there speak English yeah it's one of the advantages of Sri Lankan monasteries in America is that at least the ones I went to people there mostly speak English instead of Thai or Burmese or like Sinhalese

so

um but as I mentioned

I think it was a few episodes ago that there is a reform movement it's like a forest tradition in Sri Lanka that I've heard is very strict and very good

so

um probably I mean most Buddhism in Sri Lanka is corrupt I mean you've got monks who with briefcases that go to work as as school teachers and they they're

taking salary and some of them will even say that so long as you practice kawitis interrupt this you're not parajika you know you can have sex so long as you you commit the sin of Onan and that sort of thing it's very corrupt in fact the the Sangha in Sri Lanka has collapsed at least twice I think where they couldn't find any real monks anymore that weren't paragic or invalidly ordained and so they'd have to go out and like get monks or send people to Thailand or Burma to be ordained so that they could come back as real monks and then start start the song of going again in Sri Lanka but as I say there is

a strong Forest tradition there or so

I've Been Told

so you might want to look into that and

I mean there's going to be corrupt

Buddhism anywhere you go any country

that has Buddhism is going to also have

corrupt Buddhism in the corrupt form is

generally the majority

so in Burma most monks are corrupt even

in Thailand which tends to be more

strict with regard to monastic

discipline still most monks are corrupt

they just they're not following the

rules correctly they're not really

trying to become enlightened In This

Very life they're just wanting to live

an easy life they're trying to earn

Merit or something to get a better life
next time maybe to get into heaven that
sort of thing

so

so it can be very discouraging if you're
a young Monk and you're very idealistic
and then you go somewhere where
like almost all the monks around you are
just unconscientious sloppy monks who
aren't even trying

so that I mean you need to find yourself
a good environment and it could be just
a small group you know it could be in a
forest in Sri Lanka or in Thailand or
Burma or or America Canada wherever
but try to find some like-minded people

who will support your practice and you
can support them

I mean at least you know with moral
support

so I'll just move on to keep lavinia's
next question here

he says imagine if the Burmese
government had needed your advice
regarding the islamization of their
country what advice would you have given
them to stop it

well golly

that's a tough question I mean monks
really aren't supposed to get involved
in politics so I might have just said
you know whatever you guys decide is
fine with me you know have fun

good luck to you

but um I know if if they like aim to gun
at me and said give us advice or we
shoot you

um well

islamization of the country

yeah I mean you could Deport Muslims
that aren't legal residents that aren't
citizens I suppose

um you know discourage immigration from
like rohingya refugees or some such or
just

Muslims from Bengal I think that's where
most of them come into Burma is uh on
the border with Bangladesh

I mean I would discourage them from uh

massacring and slaughtering and so forth
that's really not the way to go about it
I mean in the short term you might
accomplish your goals but you just set
yourself up for something a lot worse in
the long run

so I mean you have to use

I mean you have to be in accordance with
dharma whatever you're doing

but I've never really uh

I think just having strong Dharma would
help to protect Burma and I think Burma
is protected to some degree because it
does have strong faith in dhamma and a
lot of serious Dharma practice that are
in some ways helping to protect the
country even though they've got the

military dictatorship and so forth
but as I mentioned last in the last q a
the military dictatorship is a mixed
blessing it goes both ways because it's
it's keeping out a lot of the degeneracy
of like globalist liberalism for example
and there is a lot of degeneracy in that
like um the the gender fascism of trans
the transgender movement that I was
mentioning in in response to the first
question

so I think I'll just move on to the next
question I don't think I would have
really a whole lot to say to them other
than you know whatever you do try to
accomplish your goals without

you know murdering and just you know
just completely flying in the face of
dhamma

so

keep the many assistance asks this next
question did the Buddha care what color
the robes have

to be and how the monks wear them or was
it only important that they covered
certain parts of the body are monks
allowed to tell laypeople which robe
color they prefer

well

originally monks were wearing just I
mean it was it was like a shawl I mean
the upper robe was like probably
approximately six by nine hand spans

which was not really very big and they just throw it over both shoulders which is kind of the way I did it if you look in uh my oldest videos that were taken back when I was still a monk in Burma you can see the way I I wore my robes it wasn't the way modern monks mostly wear their robes

um

I mean by the time you get the monastic rules were developed which was fairly early on there's a bunch of lots of regulations in the gardener ropes you know I've got allowable materials out of which robes are can be made you've got forbidden materials out of which robes

can be made for example there's actual
rules and you're not allowed to make a
robe out of owl wings

so any of you wanting to make amongst
robot of owl wings just get the idea
right out of your head or like tree bark
which doesn't necessarily mean the
Crusty outer stuff there's like the
inner bark that's fibrous that you can
weave into a kind of burlap that's a
human hair you're not allowed to use
um with regard to the colors originally
it was probably just sort of a brownish
muddy color

um but then when the rules were more
elaborated like in uh I think it's the
mahawaga the Winnie pittica it's not the

padimoka

um the padimoka just says it has to be
discolored there's a party mocha rule
saying that monk shrub has to be
discolored

I I think is now to make discolored and
they had the colors of it's like a Nila
I think which is like black or kind of
blue black sort of a like a clay or like
mud color

um I think mud is like brown it just has
to be like a dark color and probably
that would Fade Out and it would just
become sort of like this dingy like
Tawny or sort of a grayish color I think
that would have been allowable

originally although

um if you read the later rules the more developed rules which are attributed to the Buddha then there's a list of forbidden colors ironically saffron is a forbidden color like bright yellow you know it's like monks robes are continually called the saffron robes you know the saffron revolution in Burma and so forth but saffron technically is not an allowable color uh red is out um sort of a the color of a centipede back which is sort of a bright orange reddish color that's out um white is out but technically there are some colors like gray that it's not on the list of

forbidden colors even though I've never seen a monk wearing gray robes but I do think it would be allowable even though people would say it's not right because nobody else is doing it

so

um the proper color for robes is

generally like a brownish color

yellowish brown reddish brown somewhere

and even a slightly purplish Brown like

Ironwood the inner bark of the iron wood tree

is used by mon monks for making robes

for for dyeing their robes

and it's sort of a purplish brownish

color which technically is allowable

oh the color of chicken blood is not allowable

so uh let's see here yeah so did the Buddha care what color of the robes have to be and how the robes will wear them oh what color robes have to be I mean he was just

they weren't allowed to wear like what lay people wore which is mostly white you know they had to just kind of discolor it and make it dingy and and make the cloth more valueless originally and then it became more standardized later on

um and with regard to how the monks wear them yeah it's also in the lit in the rules the elaborated rules outside of

the parimoka

um you know there's forbidden ways of
doing your lower robe and your upper
robe like the lower rope you're not
supposed to have it like an elephant's
trunk or like the the fishtail you know
there's all these styles that people
probably wore their lower robes you know
not not monks but like lay people
because lay people were wearing like
sarongs in those days too
what a monk wears now is not so
different from what everyone was wearing
in the Ganges Valley
2500 years ago at least regard to
terrafono

um

so

I think I think the elephant's trunk one is what a lot of Thai monks actually wear their robes where it's rolled up into like a tube in the front where I think I mean I'm on put on my robes I don't have them here they're up in the attic but you just kind of well I won't even I won't even explain it it's just a way of folding it and then kind of folding it over to hold it on and then you put a rope or the whatever kind of belt you've got to hold that on and then the upper robe mostly you're you have to cover both shoulders when you're in public

so like if you're around the monastery
especially if you're paying respect you
have to uncover your right shoulder as a
way of showing respect you're making
confession or something you uncover the
shoulder if you're in public you've got
to cover both shoulders

and there are Sakia rules which are sort
of rules that were probably added a
little later to the padimoka rolls that
have

um you know your your robes have to be
like leveled they have to be even in the
front in the back you know you can't
have them you can't wear them sloppy the
corners have to be kind of lined up and

so forth so you have to wear them neatly
you have to be more or less presentable
even though you're wearing you know
dingy Rags but you have to wear them
neatly

so

I I ca I think I answered that one
except for this last part are monks
allowed to tell lay people which robe
color they prefer There are rules about
if somebody is going to donate to a
robes you're not allowed to go pester
them about you know do it this way don't
do it that way
uh if you do that then you have to
Forfeit the robe
because you're supposed to be easy to

support so long as it's allowable

um then

then moms can do it like if the

layperson asks the monk what color he'll

he prefers do you prefer more of a

golden brown or a reddish brown

um then the monk would probably be able

to answer but he shouldn't be seeking

them out while they're making the robe

and pestering them with you know I want

it this way not that way monk should be

easy to support but you have to be

careful with brown I learned that the

hard way that the English word Brown of

course means Brown

like those doors back there are dark

brown and then in Burma if you look it
up in a in an English to Burmese
dictionary

you look for the Burmese word for brown
and it's anyo

that's how you say brown and Burmese and
yo but I found out the hard way that
brown and then anyo have a lot of
overlap they mostly overlap but there
are Shades that we would call Brown that
they wouldn't call anyo and there are
Shades that they would call I know that
we wouldn't call Brown like sort of a
raspberry color actually they would call
a no and so I'm saying I want Brown I
don't want this red color and they go oh
it's it's it's a no all right and then I

get this robe it's like the color of
like cranberry sauce or something
oh

so I mean you do have to tell the lay
people you know don't give you a robe
that's a forbidden color because then
you're not supposed to wear it
but be careful if it's in Burma and you
want Brown because uh and yo is not
exactly the same as brown

so I'll just move on to keep doing this
next question

is let's see

have you ever experienced

depersonalization during meditation in
this state you feel disconnected from

yourself or your surroundings your voice
doesn't feel it's your own for example
um yeah again I was asked about this
last time I think and it sounds like
schizophrenia to me where you're just
sort of like from like at a distance
from yourself you know it's like when
you talk it's like somebody else is
talking

um

yeah I mean I've I've experienced
depersonalization in the positive sense
of just your ego dissolves you know your
concept of I pretty much dissolves in
meditation like when you're not thinking
anymore when your mind is just empty you
know there's no I mean mind going on at

that time

um but with regard to this kind of
depersonalization it reminds me of the
very first time I had malaria and I was
really sick with malaria

um

and what I would think it was like
hearing somebody else talking in another
room like my own thoughts were like
these muffled sounds that were like
coming from through a doorway or
something

um

but yeah I've never really experienced
depersonalization as a kind of
psychological you know pathological

condition that I'm aware of that I can
recall offhand
so

I mean I experienced depersonalization
in the positive Buddhist sense like what
you should be experiencing but uh as a
kind of mental disorder

um maybe that one the first time that I
got malaria

but um that's about it so I think I'll
just move on to the next question here

and this is from Cool Whip

and Cool Whip says what's the difference
and similarity between dependent

origination and no self can you please

explain the two in their relationship to
rebirth Karma and Enlightenment you

often say that most Buddhists
misunderstand both these teachings
dependent core rising and no self
what is it exactly that you think most
get wrong about them what makes these
teachings so hard to understand
intellectually
why is it so hard to see experientially
are these five questions or one
well that could be a sixth one even
so let's see I'm gonna have to what's
the difference and similarity between
dependent origination and no self so
in Buddhism there's really no
suited that I can recall saying I mean
there might be one I'm just not

recalling them offhand saying that you
know this is the how no self applies to
dependent origination

I mean it wouldn't surprise me if it's
in there somewhere

but as a general rule terrible Buddhism
has no self as one principle dependent
origination is another principle you
know they don't really link them up

but in majama kabutism it's linked up so
I'm gonna have to put on the majama
confess to discuss this

let's see make sure I get the eyes
straight

don't want a crooked eye

okay

so that's I think the one person who did

the best job of integrating dependent
origination no self and also emptiness
or voidness was nagarjuna I think he was
possibly the greatest Buddhist
philosopher uh aside from godama Buddha
himself
and um
according to him I mean because
everything is dependently called Rising
it's not real things that are definitely
coverizing because of you know dependent
on other real things it's like the whole
it's like this whole web of
they're I mean they they seem to exist
only within the context of of these
other causes

it's really hard to explain it's very
deep and very subtle
but it's because nothing has an inherent
self-essence
that makes it dependently colorizing and
no self and empty because you've got
these things arising and passing away in
the phenomenal world but none of them
has an intrinsically real self Essence
as they say in in like Mahayana Buddhism
self-existence it doesn't exist
on its own because of its own self
Essence it appears to exist because all
these other things are appearing to
exist and it just kind of fits into the
context of these other things that
appear to exist and none of it none of

these things have an inherently real

self Essence no no ultimately real

distinct individuality

and that that's where no self comes from

that's dependent origination and also

that is emptiness

so can I please explain the two and the

relationship to rebirth Karma and

enlightenment

well let's see rebirth dependent

origination

um it's because I mean you've you have

these conditions that lead to your mind

your your karmic momentum you know your

karma

um

appearing to exist in this phenomenal world and I mean so long as those causes continue to exist you continue to go Life After Life according to Buddhist philosophy

um Karma yeah that's I already mentioned that the enlightenment is where you transcend that

Enlightenment is you see the underlying reality you see that all this stuff is ultimately empty of any kind of inherent self-existence that it's it's like an illusion it's like a dream or the Matrix or whatever

let's see so you often say that most Buddhists misunderstand both these teachings dependent co-arising and no

self what is it exactly that you think
most get wrong about them with regard to
dependent Rising

um in terravada Buddhism especially but
even in uh nagarjuna in his Mula majama
karaka he has one chapter giving lip
service to the 12 nidana Theory where uh
dependent core Rising was so difficult
to understand so subtle

because in a way it's dancing around

Duality I mean it's like

it's it's so subtle

that it just very quickly ossified into
this 12 links

Ys

et cetera et cetera it's just the 12

links and so most scholar monks in Burma for example they just memorized the 12 links and think they understand it when really they don't because I don't think that dependent core Rising can adequately be explained by the 12 need Donna Theory the 12 links that I think that is sort of a kind of intellectual coping mechanism for the fact that most monks including most scholar monks really did not understand dependent core rising and according to the legend the Buddha almost became a Hermit and did not start teaching Buddhism because he figured nobody would understand dependent cool rising and now does any kind of Buddhist scholar thinks

that he pretty much has a grasp of
it and most of them do not
so with Guardian no self

I think one of the main
misunderstandings of no self is the idea
that

um I think it was the Aria sebasti
project was saying above where you have
to get rid of yourself but there is no
self to get rid of

ultimately because nothing has any
inherent self-existence it's all sort of
like this interconnected web of
causation with the causes themselves
being you know indirectly created by
other causes and there is no ultimate

ultimately real causer of all this

so

let's see what makes these teachings so
hard to understand intellectually partly

you just can't really grasp them

intellectually because the intellect

Works in Duality you have to something

has to either exist or not exist

and I mean we're dealing with something

that kind of virtually exists you know

it potentially exists it seems to exist

but at the same time it is an illusion

so it's it's like a paradox in a way

why is it so hard to see it

experientially most people just locked

into their beliefs they're locked into

the intellect locked into their feelings

locked into their ego and they can't let
go of those long enough to see the
Ultimate Reality which is all around us
all the time anyway
and I hope I've done a fairly
competent job of attempting to answer
that question because this this kind of
stuff it's I mean I wearing The Fez
which indicates that it's It's Tricky
just to begin with
but I think there's going to be more uh
majellica stuff coming up so I'll just
set the Fez aside and move on to the
next question for now
this is also from Cool Whip and this
question

uh if you want to read the entire
question go to question answer number 59
on YouTube and look for Cool Whip
and it is a long question it's like a
chapter out of a book it's it's a a
lengthy essay of a question but
fortunately I mean if you want to read
the whole thing that's where I direct
you to go and read the whole thing
um but he has sort of a concise summary
which summarizes the question towards
the end here

and that is Canon Aura hunt continue his
intellectual education about the natural
world does knowledge of conventional
reality exclude nibana if nibana is the
absolute and if conventional reality

reality is part of the absolute then
aren't they aren't mutually exclusive so
yeah cool whip is talking about how he's
in a way like an information junkie like
a lot of us in the west I am also to
some degree and
it's it's sort of
there are a lot of monks who say you
should only be I mean you shouldn't be
studying this worldly stuff it's a
distraction it's not going to get you
enlightened you should just study dhamma
and meditate you know just sit alone
meditate under a tree or something and
you know just don't waste your time
reading books not even I mean some of

them would even say not even Buddhist books

and Cool Whip here is an intellectual type person he's curious he wants to understand things and I can relate to that I mean we're just sort of intellectual it's in a way it's a survival Instinct in humans where you want to learn about all kinds of stuff just to ultimately originally it was to you know increase your survival value and maybe increase your attractiveness to females so that your your DNA survives into the Next Generation but um let's see can arhan continue his intellectual education about the natural world I don't think there's any rule

that says he wouldn't that an
enlightened being to some degree would
still

um he'd still have habits and
preferences from before his

Enlightenment although he would no
longer be identifying with them and just
be nature taking its course you know
just be this momentum running itself out
and if he was an intellectual or a
scholar he might continue with uh
intellectual Pursuits to some degree
although it would just be
sort of a habit pattern that didn't die
when he became enlightened I mean he
wouldn't gain anything by it really

because he'd already gained the absolute
I mean you can't really gain anything
more than that
so it's here does knowledge of
conventional reality exclude nibbana
um it's not really knowledge I mean the
only true knowledge is nibbana or the
only true knowledge is knowledge of the
absolute of ultimate truth because
anything less than ultimate truth is
conventional truth which is delusional
to some degree it's belief it's not
knowledge

I mean for everyone to have or for lots
of people to have beliefs that agree
with each other that kind of locks it in
and they'll call it knowledge because

you know it's backed up by all this you know other authorities and just by their own personal experience which ultimately is also illusory or delusional

um but I mean

I'm I'm really interested in for example biology especially like darwinian evolution

because it helps you so much to understand human nature at least from one point of view ultimately I mean it's not going to get you enlightened probably except in one sense in that the best use of the intellect is for use as a detector

I mean you can use the intellect to

shoot down shoddy arguments and if you don't have that you can just get lured or just misled into believing all kinds of weird dumb stuff so using your intellect as a detector and I mean just studying all kinds of things being a polymath can help you with that but I think the ultimately the best use for the intellect would be something like Nagarjuna did what Kant was trying to do and that's use the intellect to demonstrate to yourself if not to others that the intellect is inadequate at understanding Ultimate Reality and you're gonna have to go beyond the intellect even though it's very satisfying you

know in a way it's kind of like sex or something that you know you can be like an information junkie and you can get pleasure from learning these things

but um

I mean ultimately it's neither good nor bad I suppose

but

let's see let's go back to the question

I have to reread these sometimes because

I like digress away and wind up talking

about something completely different so

Canon aurohan continue his intellectual

education about the natural world

um I don't think most of them would

really be interested in anymore some of

them could I don't think that it would
disqualify somebody from being
enlightened especially if he's a teacher
and he's just reading you know what the
the current Zeitgeist is you know what
the current world view is so that he can
better explain things in accordance with
people's accepted world view something
like that might be totally kosher
totally acceptable
but um

let's see does knowledge of conventional
reality exclude nibana

uh that's kind of a trick question too I
mean nibbana itself I mean it's off the
scale

so some people would say yes and some

people would say I mean nothing can
exclude nibana nothing can really
exclude reality just the only thing that
would exclude reality would be absolute
pure delusion

oh

but I mean the Ultimate Reality is
underlying everything it's like some of
the more philosophical theoretical
physicists are getting kind of into the
zone of nibana with like their like the
quantum field or something like that
um I mean if it if it helps
and then that's fine or if it's just
sort of a neutral thing that you occupy
your spare time with that's fine you're

probably better off studying a science
book than playing a dumb video game or
something

so

but

I mean nibana really doesn't exclude
anything

just like God doesn't exclude anything
unless you want to say they exclude
everything because again everything and
nothing you know is and isn't you know
they're both invalid and the intellect
really can't deal with it

so gosh it's

it's like people ask me questions that
are easily answered and then I answer
them but the ones that aren't easily

answered

um you know I don't do it justice or
whatever and then it's like it's like
the the percentage of questions that
aren't easily answered are like
increasing

it's making up more and more of each
each q a I think

but anyway this next question is from
Fred

and uh I'm with Fred bless his heart he
uh he asks questions sometimes he'll
just make a statement and then just toss
in a question mark at the end
um sometimes it's it's not at all
apparent that he's expecting an answer

but this time I mean there's two
question marks here and so I'm gonna try
and answer these questions
so the first part here is I found them
the Maya kamawibanga suta perplexing
karma seems to be unfathomable question
mark and the Buddha does say that karma
is unfathomable he he warns people don't
you can't really figure it out I mean
you can say that it's volition you can
say that it's a will that sort of a
thing but working out the subtleties of
how Karma Works can make you insane it
says that in the sutta is
so yeah it can be perplexing especially
if you're trying to use the intellect to
understand what is beyond the intellect

so his his second question here is is it
really feasible the Lord knew even
others karmic path

um and the Lord of course is is God I'm
a Buddha so

um I'm sure that if if the texts are
anywhere close to being accurate with
regard to his wisdom you know he could
see where a person was headed you know
he could see the predicament they were
in

and uh I mean that is one of the the the
knowledges the abineas that uh a lot of
really Advanced yogic practitioners get
is just being able to look at people
faring according to their karma

so you know you're sort of reading their
mind you can see their see you know
where they are at mentally and
spiritually so yeah I could I could
accept that although terravotto says
even the Buddha himself who had a kind
of limited omniscience still could not
predict the future with 100 certainty
because the future just doesn't exist
yet and we're not living in a purely
deterministic world
that determinism is rejected and free
will also is rejected and so again you
wind up in this sort of intellectual
ambiguity
um that maybe you just cannot grasp
intellectually it's just a kind of

paradox

so

I think he would have a fairly good idea
you know what direction a person that he
met was heading but still I don't think
he could just look at that person and
say you know 57 422 lifetimes from now
that person is going to become
enlightened anything like that

so

I think I'll just move on a nice
question here and this one's from Austin
and Austin said before you became a monk
did you feel directionless or almost
like you hadn't found your purpose yet
in this life laylife and Society in

general definitely does seem like a
turning wheel of Sorrow well
for 10 years before I became a monk I
was intending to become one eventually
it's just that I liked you know sex
drugs and rock and roll and pizza and
ice cream and all that so that I was
definitely going to be ordained as a
monk before the age of 30. well I wasn't
in like a major hurry
um I was a little bit ahead of schedule
I was 27 I think when I was ordained
so let's see uh did I feel directionless
there was only one time in my life I
guess when I was feeling directionless
and that was when I was like 16 and 17
and I had reached the stage where I

realized that adults did not have what's
what figured out you know they were just
as clueless as I was

and so I just went into this open

Rebellion against the system so to speak

and got into lots of trouble with

skipping school almost flunked out of

school you know just partying and just

doing whatever I felt like doing

and um

that was kind of directionless I mean I

was I was just sort of hitting a wall

because it obviously wasn't working out

very well you know just being a normie

and dedicating my life to making as much

money as possible so I can buy as much

stuff as possible that was
it just didn't appeal to me
after I reached enough maturity to you
know by the age of 16 it really was not
much of a viable option anymore and I
didn't know what to replace it with at
first
so it wasn't until
um in a towering passion my father
required me to either start seeing a
youth counselor or just get out
that I started seeing a youth counselor
because that seemed to be the easier
option and he was a spiritually oriented
person who was into ROM Das and started
giving me Eastern philosophy books to
read and at first it didn't make much

sense to me because there was wasn't anything already in my mind stored there that would be integrated with this new information you know it was just sort of this completely alien information coming in that I mean I wasn't used to it you know I've never been exposed to much of it before but I could just feel intuitively yeah this this is this is legit this is the real deal you know it's like I could dedicate myself to dama or Dharma um much more than I could dedicate myself to being a normie and making as much money as possible in order to buy as much stuff as possible on the one

hand or just partying and getting into
trouble all the time just being a
rebellion just being an open Rebellion
just this wild roller coaster ride of up
and down I mean that wasn't working out
either

so there was just a matter of just a few
months of serious crisis like around the
age of 16. when

um

maybe I felt directionless but it was
like I was looking for a direction it
wasn't like I was totally lost it's like
okay I could have to work out what I
want to do
and I eventually decided I was gonna
become a monk

I didn't know exactly what kind at first
I was even considering uh like Zen or
else just making a wool robe for myself
and getting a bowl and just taking on
wandering

but the rest is history I suppose so
I'll just move on to the next question
here and this is from maitrea Buddha
and maitreya Buddha says what is your
opinion on stoicism

and I really haven't read much that was
as I read I started reading the
meditations of Marcus Aurelius and it
was so dry and boring and sort of
plotting you know kind of commonplace to
me after having been a monk for many

years that I didn't even finish the book
and that's kind of rare for me not to
finish a book

I'd have this idea that once you get
started on it you should finish it
before you move on to something else

I do remember reading schopenhauer's
criticisms of stoicism that he said that
stoicism was largely based on cynicism
you know the ancient Greek philosophy of
cynicism like diogenes
and that

um they had kind of thrown out the baby
with the bath water the the cynics were
really ascetics you know they were they
were they came closer to like a Buddhist
monk you know the cynic philosophers

although they were allowed to have sex
and handle money and so forth but they
were they had a more radical
renunciation of Normie Society than the
stoics whereas the stoics they in a way
they acknowledge that it's psychological
I mean the Detachment has to be
psychological Detachment instead of
literally physical Detachment I mean
that the most important kind of
Detachment is mental
but then you know they're you know
they're still rich and you know eating
beasts and so forth and uh you know
they're trying to be detached from it
but it didn't work out as well as if

they were just wandering around homeless
like a like a
on like a Pacific aesthetic
so I remember schopenhower saying that
about it and uh I have to admit I I
prefer cynicism dystosism stoicism just
seems kind of plotting I mean I think
it's a good philosophy for like a
conscientious Normie

um

so I mean like for the ancient Romans
I think stoicism really was was a good
thing you know it sort of gave them
principles and kind of a philosophical
foundation and
you know I mean all in all it did more
more good than harm I'm sure

but I'm not sure if stoicism had any
kind of

salvific idea of you know like

Liberation or Enlightenment I don't know
enough about stoicism to know did if the
stoics themselves

had an ideal of like the fully
enlightened perfect stoic

I'm not sure if if they had that

but with regard to stoicism in general I
think Americans should go back to a more
stoic point of view or more stoic
attitude I think that would do us a lot
of good

um and like I've said many times before
or several times anyway that a Buddhist

layperson really should adopt a certain amount of stoicism not classical capital S stoicism but just realizing that as a layperson you've got to do

um if not bad things they're not entirely wholesome things and so not entirely wholesome consequences are going to come back at you you're going to make Bad Karma and so you have to have sort of a stoic Equanimity of accepting that bad karma when it inevitably comes back on you

because you may not have the option of always being perfectly virtuous you have a family to protect for example so

I guess that's my opinion on stoicism so

I'll just move on to the next question
this is from Tim the enchanter
and Tim the enchanter says since the
three daughters of Mara are lust desire
and aversion would it be fair to say
that maybe Mara himself is a
personification of all that is evil or
maybe evil tendencies in ourselves
well the three daughters of Mara
technically their names are Raga aradi
and Dana

Raga is usually translated as lust or
passion

literally means something like
non-delight which I think probably meant
something like being insatiable never

being satisfied and is craving usually
it's translated as craving or thirst
so I mean they're all sort of sexual
words or they could be sexual words and
I think the implication is that Mara's
like voluptuous

lascivious three daughters they're sort
of like personifications of just like
sexual desire and passion and so forth
but Mara himself

uh let's see so Timothy and chander is
asking would it be fair to say that
maybe Mara himself is a personification
of all that is evil or maybe evil
tendencies in ourselves

um

I think originally Mara was considered

to be evil I don't know where the
Buddhists came up with the idea of Mara
maybe it was like a Vedic concept before
the the Buddhas adopted the idea of Mara
Mara literally means killer you know has
the same proto-indo-european
etymology as like the English words
mortal and murder
yeah it just means killer so I mean
that's pretty pretty evil but as uh
Buddhist philosophy developed Mara did
not become just the god of evil he was
the god of Good and Evil I mean he was
the Lord of samsara
so in a way he's sort of the god of
samsara he's the god of the conclusion

the god of worldliness and if you can't
get you to be bad he'll get you to be
good because if you're good then you go
to heaven and that's still within the
realm of Mara

you know he's the Lord of all of it at
least in a symbolic symbolic kind of way
so maybe Tim the enchanter is asking if
Mara really doesn't exist and he's just
a personification sort of like the the
devil in in Lord of the Flies not the
movie which completely avoids all the
philosophy stuff but in the original
book where the devil or the Lord of the
Flies builds above

um you know he's not just this
individual being you know he's he just

inhabits like a dark corner of
everybody's mind and then everybody's
that dark corner of everybody's mind
forms like a hive mind that gives a
reality to this higher being
um you know Mara could be like that I
mean I really don't think that we need
any kind of cosmic bad guy to lead us
into temptation because we do a good
enough job of it ourselves
so yeah I'm skeptical of
um a lot of the Buddhist Pantheon
including the reality or even the
conventional reality of Mara himself I
mean I'm sure that there are demonic
entities out there but just to have a

person a being whose job is to be tempting humans and preventing them from becoming enlightened because that's really his main concern in the Buddhist texts isn't just sending people to Hell luring people into evil he's just trying to keep them unenlightened like with the go to kasuta you know he's he's trying to get the Buddha to prevent gordica from committing suicide because he's got a fairly good idea that gonica is going to become enlightened when he dies

so I think I'll just move on to Tim the enchanter's next question here

please elaborate a little bit about the eight requisites that monks should have

or must have yeah I mean their requisite
so they are required
and the eight requisites to see if I
remember these you got three robes lower
robe upper robe outer robe and you've got
the belt that holds up your lower robe
when you are required to wear in public
then you've got the Razor for shaving
your face and your head you've got a
needle for repairing your robes you've
got a water filter
and that's seven three robes row uh the
belt oh and the bowl you got your arms
Bowl so that's eight so three robes the
belt
the the razor the needle the water

filter and the bowl

eight requisites although you could reduce that to seven because it says in the text that you can use a corner of your robe as a water filter you can just strain water through just some of the cloth of your robe but then it turns out that there's also a crypto ninth requisite that monks are required to have and that is a regulation sitting cloth

because monks had to have a sitting Clause when they were living under trees just so they won't be sitting in the dirt or in the mud when it rains it just kind of helps to keep them a little cleaner and maybe helps a little bit to

keep bugs and parasites off of them

so elaborate a little bit

three robes are just rectangles of cloth

that are dyed the proper color made out

of the proper material and sewn in the

proper way

uh the belt according to the text

there's two possible belts you can have

uh I think it's called Patika and then

there's sukaranda Patika just means a

strip of cloth which is generally what I

used and the sukaranda literally means

Pig intestine which is just a twisted

rope because apparently pig intestines

are twisty

so it's a twisted rope or a strip of

cloth uh the razor generally would have been a straight razor in the Buddha's day and I'm glad I didn't have to shave my own head using a straight razor when I was a monk the water filter is just like a piece of cloth that you filter water through to just to get out the chunks and the little animals and uh the needle which for so many rows needles are self-explanatory and the sitting cloth um it has to be a regulation size and it has to have a border sewn onto it and so forth um but a sitting cloth would be well you can't see what my hands are can you so I guess I guess I answered that

question

so I'll just move on to the next

question this is from covax incipad

zidino

and CEO of action C pad ziruna asks the

interesting question wooden and Aura

hunt be closer to being an NPC than us

since they have no volition so not a

playable character in a way

well

um

you could say that there's an NPC in the

butt

I mean they'd be more advanced than we

are if if an araha is an NPC he would be

more advanced than the people playing

the game so I mean he'd be like the NPC
of an omniscient computer

you've got like a computer game that on
an omniscient computer

you know it's just a perfect it knows
everything or whatever and then you it
has this NPC who always does the right
thing and in a way an arahond is less of
an NPC than we are because we are
programmed by our volition we do not
have free will

so our volition is kind of like a mental
prison for us

you know it's like

will I mean you reach schopenhauer I

mean will has a mind of its own

essentially and it's largely habitual

that our karma is is like
habit energy you know it's just this
momentum that's pushing us through life
so uh and our hunt would be less
predictable than us
because you know we are creatures of
habit and and an arahond I mean he may
have habits too that haven't completely
faded out but nevertheless he is no
longer like clinging to them and
identifying with them so an aura hunt
with uh in some sense be less of an NPC
than we are because he would be more
awake than we are and more of a you'd be
more free than we are because to some
degree we are limited by our habits

so I think I'll just move on to Sea of
Action cpad zidrina's next question
and that is I have a few questions based
on a paper called the truth of nagarjuna
something Beyond Nirvana

uh by Dr

erden Murray yazgan yalkin I tried to
link the paper but the comment gets
destroyed by YouTube I was reading the
paper and had many questions about it as
it summarizes some of the things

nagarjuna says in his books like the
Mula majama kakaraka

um okay so this is majomoka I put the
majomic Affairs back on
get the tassel nice here

I don't know you should come a little

more forwards

yeah okay so

and as a disclaimer here I didn't read
this article I am familiar with the Mula
majama kakaraka I have some knowledge of
what majamika is about and what in the
garden it was saying especially in the
Mula majama karaga

um so without reading the paper itself
which does sound interesting maybe I
will read it eventually

okay question number one why does
nagarjuna say that Emptiness is a higher
truth than even Nirvana

um again I haven't read the paper but I
would assume that nagarjuna says

Emptiness is a higher truth and even
Nirvana because emptiness applies to
Nirvana and samsara
that Nirvana is sort of restricted to
this ultimate absolute state that is the
goal of Dharma practice
uh whereas emptiness ultimately all of
samsara is empty so that would be my my
educated guess on why he would say
Emptiness is a higher truth even than
Nirvana because it is less restrictive I
mean it applies to just absolutely
everything
so number two even though Nagarjuna says
Emptiness is a higher truth than Nirvana
he still says that the ultimate truth
itself is there is no such thing as

ultimate truth okay the ultimate truth
itself is there is no such thing as
ultimate truth can you please explain
why nagarjuna rejects even both of these
things as the ultimate truth it's like
I've been saying like in this video and
the last video that
anything that you can come up with
intellectually or conceptually is just
some Sark it's just a symbol
so the majama Buddhists they really went
completely radical in in just not
redefined the absolute I mean they
reified the absolute less than the
terrible buttons did I mean the terror
Bonds were saying you know there's like

84 ultimate realities or something you
got like 52 ultimately real mental
states that are qualitatively different
from each other you've got Consciousness
is ultimately real

um Nirvana or Nirvana is ultimately real
and I think there's 28 different kinds
of matter including masculinity and
femininity that are ultimately real
and

um I don't think that that is correct I
think the only nibbana I mean using
Buddhist jargon would be ultimately real
that all the rest is

um dependently core Rising ultimately
empty of self-essence
and so when when Nirvana when nagarjuna

says the ultimate truth itself is there
is no such thing as ultimate truth I
mean it can't be put into words I mean
as soon as you call it it you have
symbolized it so he's just completely
not I mean he's not going there at all
that's that's what

um majama early majama was doing it was
using these logical arguments to up
demolish All Views and then at the very
end when all this left is smoking ruins
and in the majomoka philosophy it would
just turn on itself and demolish itself
too and all this left is just emptiness
so

I mean he's dealing with intellect here

um the purpose of Lord Buddha's teaching is to liberate us from our Thinking by means of our thinking some Mahayana Tech says that

and uh yeah I mean the the majama

Buddhists took the radical step of just dismissing any concept even of

Enlightenment even the concept of

Enlightenment is just a concept it's

just more some sorrow sort of like I was reading in the Tibetan book of the great Liberation in the previous episode

um you know it's Nirvana itself is just a concept of mind it's all a concept of mind some sorrow is a concept of mind

you know it's just all a concept of mind and so you just dismiss all of that and

I mean you don't say that there's
something there you say don't say
there's nothing there because again
you've got the duality of exists and
doesn't exist and it just completely
transcends that you can't wrap your head
around intellectually it's not going to
happen

so I'll just move on to question three
here

nagarjuna says The Emptiness is the
cause of interdependent existence itself
can you please explain this and how
emptiness isn't just the nature of
interdependent existence but rather its
cause

and see can you please explain how
emptiness isn't just the nature of
independent existence but rather its
cause well I don't think

I don't think emptiness is the cause of
dependent core Rising it's just that I
mean they're they're pretty much
synonymous that I already mentioned this
above that nagarjuna pretty much just
pointed out that

dependent core Rising no self and
emptiness I mean they're all just
essentially one

and that is there is no Essence there is
no independent self Essence there is no
individual self-reality no swabawa
so let's see

emptiness is the cause of interdependent
existence itself

yeah I'm I'm not sure that I would agree
with that phraseology The Emptiness is
the cause I mean Emptiness is
interdependent existence in fact one of
the most famous verses of the Mula
majama Kaka is saying by dependent core
Rising we mean emptiness
that they're synonymous that's how he
that's how he explains Emptiness is you
know everything is empty because
everything is dependently co-arising
you know it exists only provisionally
because of these other causes and there
is no individual inherently real

self-existence to any of it

so maybe the guy who wrote the article
didn't get it or I don't know what the
deal is

so I'll just move on to this next

question about nagarjuna here can you
explain the nyaya school that nagarjuna
was criticizing all it says in the paper
is that they believed in swabawas

similar to abhidham Traditions but I
never heard of the school before I'm the
only nyaya School in Ancient India that
I know of it was proto-hindu you know it
was it was in The Vedic tradition and it
was similar to abhidham the the Hindus
themselves have at least two different
schools one of them starts with s I

think I can't remember I can't remember
what the name is but the other one was
just means something like method or
logic

and

apparently uh something like abhidham
was in fashion in Ancient India after
the Buddhist time like around the time
of Ashoka and afterwards
and uh so not only the Buddhists had
their abhidamas but apparently the
proto-hindus had their abhidamas and one
of them was developed by this nyaya
school if that is the same Yaya that is
being mentioned in the paper
so it was it was a non-buddhist abhidham

school essentially

so I'll just move on to the next

question here this is the last or the

last uh majamika nagarjuna question

please give any of their thoughts you

think are worth mentioning about this

paper or subject well I mean I haven't

really read the paper

um I might though I mean it sounds

interesting and uh the subject of

majamika yeah I've kind of already been

uh talking about that after all I am

wearing the Fez

so

yeah nothing really comes to mind I'm

sorry to say so I'll have to take the

Fez off now

and so I'll move on to the next question
this is from Judge Caligula Bushman
and judge Caligula Bushman says I had a
question about the eighth precept does
this mean you should sleep on the floor
or as some sources claim that you can
sleep in a bed as long as it's not too
luxurious well the actual uh precept is
I take I undertake the precept to
refrain from large or great beds now
wait large
let's see oh high or high or large
bedsayana
so Maha means great big and ucha means
hi
and I've never come across in terrible

in the literature

a definition for laypeople not sleeping

on a High bed but in the winnia in the

rules of monastic discipline the

technical definition for a High bed that

a monk is not allowed to sleep on is if

it's more than eight finger widths

the bottom of the frame is more than

eight finger widths above the floor

so that would be what about six inches

maybe

so if the bottom of the of the frame of

the bed is more than about this high off

the bed and it's easy to check you just

take your fingers and go in like that

some people say oh what's this it's the

finger width of the Buddha himself and

the Buddhist fingers were four and a half times as wide as an ordinary person or three and a half times as wide that the commentaries vary so that I mean you can sleep on this bed that's you know way up high like a top bunk or something but I don't think so it's go with eight fingers like this just go like that if you can't if you can't fit them under the door of the bed frame then that's good and uh a large bed is large enough for more than one person to sleep on so

if you want to keep the eight precepts you might just want to take a blanket and fold it up into a sort of a air

mattress kind of thing and sleep on that
or if you've got an air mattress or like
a camping pad or something you can sleep
on those unless you just have a tiny low
bed to begin with

so I'll just uh move on to judge

Caligula bushman's next question here
another question that sprang to mind is
the exclusion of people who have
disabilities from being ordained how
strict are they is anyone restricted or
will the severity of the condition be
taken into consideration for example a
minor physical deformity like a cleft
lip a missing finger or something
similar that doesn't need further care
are these grounds for exclusion as well

well there is a list of diseases that a person who has any of these diseases should not be ordained one of them is leprosy a leper is not supposed to be ordained there's some like skin diseases like

like eczema or something I think

um

what is it epilepsy is one of them uh I think asthma actually it's some kind of lung thing some kind of breathing thing but there's this list and uh they're not supposed to be ordained but I have seen a one called leprosy he was I mean when I first saw this mod he was a temporary monk it's

it's pretty common in Burma and Thailand
that you're ordained temporarily at
least once in your life if you're a
Buddhist male

and uh this guy I mean it looked like
pizza on his arm and I I didn't know
what it was at first until finally later
on I realized that there was a fair
amount of leprosy in that area I had I
had lepers offering me food
and um

so I I'm pretty sure that's what it was
and

with regard to these disabilities I mean
so long as you're you're not castrated
you have to have a set of balls on you
in order to be ordained well and even if

you're ordained the it's invalid the the
ordination is just invalid is still not
ordained because you have to be an
intact male in order to be ordained as
as a Buddhist monk as a biku

um but with regard to like epilepsy and
and these other diseases like leprosy
and so forth

um they're not supposed to be ordained
but if they are ordained anyway the
monks who ordained this person are
they've committed a minor transgression
requiring
confession

it's like the the founder of the
tradition in which I was ordained was

Tom pugu Seattle

there's another rule that says a monk is not allowed to be ordained without his parents permission

and there was this young man who wanted to be ordained but his parents would not give permission they were like

fundamentalist Christians and

um pump Luciano said well the Sangha is willing to make the sacrifice you know

they're willing to break a rule in order

to ordain him even though it's against

the rules to ordain someone whose

parents don't consent

and it's it's similar with regard to

these these diseases there's an obscure

list of there's much more detailed about

who should not be ordained and that includes someone who's Too Tall or Too Short or too fair-skinned or too dark-skinned I think even a unibrow going across is enough to disqualify somebody I think I think maybe if they're missing a finger that's still okay but if they've got like an extra finger then no and that was mainly I mean

still they would be ordained if they were ordained you know it'd just be like a minor transgression and the monks would make confession and then the transgression would be absolved um but it was that was mainly for the

purpose of

preventing the Sangha from giving the
lay supporters the Willies from someone
who looks really weird

you know just really unusual like an
albino or something there's a lot of
superstitious beliefs about albinos for
example and so I mean they were just
trying to they were looking out for the
song and not wanting to give the song a
bad reputation because of course they
wanted Domino to prosper with regard to
the the more serious diseases that
amongst are a prospective monk is
actually asked at his ordination
ceremony do you have any of these
diseases and you know they list them off

um and the the candidate is supposed to
say you know no I don't have I don't
have nachibande

um

according to the the origin story it was
the the Buddhist personal physician was
jivaka komarabacha he was a uh he was
like this excellent doctor you know he
could cure things that even nowadays
people can't cure and so what was
happening with people with these
diseases these chronic diseases were
being ordained as monks just so that the
Sangha doctor jeevika would cure them
and then they were dropping out again
and so I think it was jivica himself who

requested the Buddha that you know he's
he's getting really you know overworked
with curing these people that are just
dropping out of the monkey as soon as
they get cured that uh maybe he could
make a rule saying that you know you
have to be healthy to begin with
although I it could just be another case
of you know not wanting to scare people
when you got this monk with Leprosy
walking walking for alms that kind of a
thing

so I guess I'll just move on to the next
question here and this is from Bill

Gahan or ismet

and Bill Gahan or ismat says you said
some mahayanasutas contain an archaic

Corps can you give the names of those
sutras do you think there are any
original teachings that were contained
in Mahayana texts but were excluded from
the polycanon for one reason or another
um Mahayana Sutra is the contain an
archaic archaic Corps well first of all
um a great many of the the sutas that
are in teravada are also in Mahayana
it's just the Mahayana
is so huge most Mahayana monks never
read them they don't know what they say
you know so there is that that you know
most of the the poly sutos have like a
Mahayana version that says pretty much
the same thing

but um this is just the Mahayana boost
they're more interested in reading the
specifically Mahayana stuff like prajna
paramita that kind of a thing

um

so with the names the names of those
sutras I mean that very much be all of
them of that sort but then you've got
other sutras

or sutras that

like like the prajna paramita or prajna
paramita sutras

like the heart Sutra or The Diamond

Cutter Sutra they've got a lot of

Mahayana Concepts like the the

bodhisattva idea but nevertheless

they're emphasizing a lot of the early

teachings like can be found in the
atikabaga of the suttony Pata
um

like you know void is let's see form is
emptiness the very Emptiness is formed
from the heart Sutra I mean terrible
Buddhism would say no that's that's a
wrong view but I mean you can see the
origins of those ideas in really archaic
sutras like the ones in the Attica Wagga
um or the parayana Wagga
so let's see

can I give the names of those sutures
yeah I would say especially something
like the heart Sutra or like The Diamond
Cutter Sutra would be that sort of Sutra

that in a way they've got a lot of later material that probably the Buddha never taught but at the same time they're emphasizing like very early ideas you know in a way

um that aspect of Mahayana the the prajna paramita movement was a kind of a reform movement trying to get back to the original Spirit

um and getting away from all this abhidharma stuff this hyper intellectual trying to classify everything and list everything and just try to explain everything intellectually

so they went back to just like Paradox and like koan like utterances that you're not even supposed to really grasp

intellectually

you know like Diamond Cutter Sutra

saying you know the the there there is

no such thing as a bodhisattva and

that's why he's a bodhisattva that kind

of a thing and it's just sort of these

paradoxes and it's like Zen

so even even the Zen approach

um in some ways it goes back to an early

uh like an early theme in in Buddhism

that eventually it didn't entirely die

out but it became less emphasized in

like taravada and so the Mahayana

Buddhists were really were trying to be

a reform movement in certain respects

like with regard to project

um

so let's see do you think there are any original teachings that were contained in Mahayana texts that were excluded from the polycanon for one reason or another

um and it'd be hard to say if they were completely excluded because then you don't know uh if they were excluded from the poly Canon I mean if something is not in the polycanon you can't say that it was there and then got deleted you know it maybe it just never was there I mean he can't I don't know of any good way of deciding that one but there are teachings um like

approximations of original teachings
attempts to get back to the original
teachings in Mahayana that were very
much de-emphasized and became kind of
wrong view in in polycan it had to be
reinterpreted like the whole idea of
um nibana the absolute being infinite
formless Consciousness luminous
all-around

um I mean you don't know if that is
really original

um

or there's another another Studio where
the the Buddha is saying this mind monks
is Luminous but it is is defiled by you
know external defilements something like

that could be interpreted as sort of
like the one mind of Mahayana Buddhism
the Dharma Kaya where they're kind of
reifying the absolute in almost like a
vedantic way but whether that was a
movement that started in early Buddhism
and then died out or whether the Buddha
actually taught something along that
line but I kind of doubt it
it's really hard to say like if
something is not found in the polycanon
you can't really say that it used to be
there but then got deleted unless you've
got some kind of evidence for that and I
don't know what the evidence would be
but the farthest that would go is that
like especially the project

uh aspect of early Mahayana was trying to get back to the original spirit and pro they were a lot closer to the original times either just a few hundred years after the time of the Buddha so they'd probably have a better idea than you know somebody in the 21st century would as to what the Buddha originally taught you know they'd still have Living Traditions you know like a lineage with you know that isn't just fading out Into Obscurity in the past that kind of a thing

so

yeah I do think that there are certain Mahayana teachings

or methods of teaching that come closer to what the Buddha originally taught than Orthodox Theravada with Abhidham in the commentarial tradition and so forth but they've also at the same time just mixed in all this other stuff that is pretty obvious to me anyway the Buddha never taught you know like The Diamond Cutter Sutra all this talk about bodhisattvas and stuff

um yeah I really do not think the Buddha was teaching the bodhisattva concept and even if you read The Diamond Cutter Sutra and it's talking about how a bodhisattva should conduct himself it sounds pretty much like some of the Mahayana sutras describing how an arhat

would conduct himself I'm not so sure
that there really would be a difference
if the two people were conducting
themselves in this way then yeah they're
probably the same kind of person and not
one of them a bodhisattva and one of
them in our hunt

so I think I'll just move on to the next
question here also from bilgahan or
ismet

according to the sutas there were many
monks who committed suicide were hired
an assassin in the Sangha it seems odd
to me the Buddha didn't make a hard-line
stance against suicide as he did against
wrong views and sexual intercourse I get

the impression in the suit is that
suicide is almost a neutral Act
however as someone who's battled with
depression I know that suicide would
take an extremely negative almost
hellish mental state dying in that mind
State should definitely be an issue
according to the logic for the Buddhism
but it doesn't seem to be the case but
well I think one reason why suicide
would take an extremely negative almost
hellish mental state nowadays is because
we are in a culture that is very much
against suicide
but in a culture where suicide was
accepted
like

Ancient Rome or

Samurai Japan or to some degree even

ancient India

um I mean it could be a philosophical

decision you wouldn't necessarily have

to reach the bottom pits of depression

in order to decide to kill yourself it

might just be a culturally conditioned

thing that under these conditions I

should fall on my sword or rip my belly

open with my short sword or or whatever

it is have the doctor open my veins like

Cato the younger did when Julius Caesar

became dictator

or was well on his way to become

dictator

um and really I mean you read the text
like they go to kasuta and gotika
committed suicide and became enlightened
in the process and the Buddha does say I
can't remember it's in the go to
consumer or not but

um

you really should not kill you terminate
your life until you've terminated your
defilements

if you're in Aura hunt then it doesn't
matter but

um you know you've already accomplished
the goal anyway but for a person that
isn't enlightened yet then committing
suicide is counterproductive because you
could still be practicing dama and

getting closer

um

so let's see here

yeah I mean in Ancient India I mean

ritual suicide for Spiritual renunciants

was pretty common actually like

um the the jains and I think the ajib

because once a Jane or ajivaka monk at

least in many cases once they uh they

thought that they had gotten rid of all

of their karma you know that they were

they were pure

than what they were supposed to do is

just go out into a like an isolated area

like a some desolate area where there's

not lots of people and just squat down

and just remain in a squatting position until they died so they would die of probably you know dehydration and kidney failure first before they died of anything else but I mean that was just standard in Ancient India at least in theory you know it was encouraged in the texts

although technically they didn't really have text because it wasn't written down but it was it was standard in the tradition that under certain circumstances uh suicide is the appropriate thing to do and it could can be done wisely especially in a culture that has a more or less wise approach to Suicide instead

of you know nowadays I mean Christianity
you know suicide was not considered to
be all that bad until Christianity came
along and then it's like spitting in
God's face because the life is a Divine
gift and so forth and it's a mortal sin
and in Dante's Inferno there's a special
ring of hell where the suicides go and
it's not nice at all it's very
unpleasant there
and uh now Christianity is being
replaced by just secular materialism
where you know you only live once and
when you're dead you're dead and so
people are just kind of afraid and
freaked out with suicide

I mean in a way if people can be kind of
afraid and freaked out of just
renouncing the world as a monk I
remember noticing that a long time ago
that

um you know people will say that suicide
is the coward's way out when actually I
mean the person who commits suicide is
doing the one thing that the person
calling him a coward is the most afraid
of and it's the same kind of resentment
towards monks sometimes like the lay
people they meet a monk who has
renounced the world they kind of resent
the very fact that this person has
renounced the very things that of this
other person values the most in life you

know just having a nice home and family
and friends and comfort and so forth you
know they might be just that is the
purpose of life for them and here's this
other person just rejecting it outright
so I would say that suicide does not
necessarily require an extremely
negative almost hellish mental state
although nowadays it's pretty common I
think

but I don't think Cato the younger
necessarily was in a hellish mental
state

um Mark Anthony when he fell on his
sword

um I mean that was for a soldier that

was the ritual way of doing it is fall
under your own sword but he is pretty
bummed out that he lost the battle of
actium and all that

um

yeah

let's see let's just get back to the top
of this question here um yeah according
to the sutures there were many monks who
committed suicide yeah there was uh
there was actually a uh like an epidemic
of it at one point where the Buddha was
teaching you know how life is just sort
of a burden

now it's just something that the you're
better off without

and then he went off into seclusion and

while he was off in seclusion there was this rash of suicides or one one monk was just volunteering to kill any other monk that wanted to die I mean he wasn't murdering them against their will but you know it's like yeah kill me next kind of a thing so then he made the rule against killing him up against murder I'm pretty sure that was the origin of the rule against killing another human being

but um

regard to suicide if you're not enlightened yet then you're kind of interfering with your own chances so it is frowned upon in that sense

so I think I'll just move on a nice question here and this is from rui and rui says hello Ponyo do you think that Awakening can be postponed that will or does it so utterly take over that any shred of will is useless this is such a weird question

I mean it may not sound all that weird but do you think that Awakening can be postponed it will I mean unless you're a Mahayana Buddhist I don't know why you would postpone Awakening if you were capable of becoming awakened you know the Mahayana Buddhists they take this vow the bodhisattva vows where they're gonna postpone Enlightenment until all beings are saved I guess that's what

they're bowing

um

so maybe some Mayana Buddhists have just

no you know it's like they get close to

it or something and they just

but uh yeah I I don't really know if if

uh Awakening can be postponed to will

I'm not sure why anyone in the right

mind would want to postpone it

unless again they're like a Mahayana

Buddhist who has been taught essentially

the wrong view that that you should

postpone Enlightenment indefinitely

which is pretty much the opposite of

what the Buddha was originally teaching

which is Strive to get enlightened In

This Very life

um

yeah so I guess I just have to say I really don't know the answer to that one it is a strange question maybe you should ask a Mahayana Buddhist especially a very wise one and then because that's part of their their spiritual tradition that you are supposed to postpone Awakening but I don't know if they get so they get really close to it where they you know it's just right there you know they can now they're almost enlightened they're right at the threshold and then they just step back as a as a matter of principle

I don't know I really that's a good question but I I'm not sure what the answer would be

do you think that Awakening can be postponed at will I mean not for everybody obviously because for some people the enlightenment just hits them upside the head just sneaks up on him and jumps on from behind so in a case like that I don't think you'd have much say in the matter and uh

yeah I really don't know why any sane spiritual practitioner would do that unless it was just like cultural conditioning they're a Mahayana Buddhist

they can't become enlightened until all beings are saved which probably isn't going to happen because it's already been an infinitely long period of time that has elapsed and all being still aren't saved yet

so let's just move on to the next question here this is from Yuga

and Yuga who says hello

hi Google can you please explain what or who is observing the phenomena in

mindfulness practice and what is the

Pauline name for that thank you

well technically you do not have to have

um anyone who's observing the phenomenon

because the phenomena themselves are

conscious

so if you're mindfully aware of let's
say an itchy nose
then that mindful awareness of the itchy
nose is itself
conscious and aware I mean you don't
have to have some
some agent
who is you know executing the
mindfulness and being aware of anything
because the mental States themselves are
aware
they are their their Consciousness I
mean they're they're suffused with
Consciousness they're made of
consciousness
so there is no who or what that is

observing other than just the act of
observing itself it just kind of reminds
me of

um Buddha Gosa and I think it's in the
the wisuri manga saying you know there
nobody who walks but there is still
walking you know it's just the walking
is walking which is that kind of strikes
me as bad logic but when you say the
mental States themselves are conscious
then you really don't need to have
anybody else to be the conscious
Observer it's just that
it's the con the mental States
themselves are conscious because they're
made of Consciousness they're suffused
with consciousness

and that may be very hard to explain but
there were a lot of time monks I think
ajan cha was like this too who talks
about the cheetah as like The Observer
you know and and they're getting towards
the sort of reifying the absolute in the
sense of you know infinite formless
Consciousness or something
but I'm not sure what the poly name for
it would be other than cheetah or uh
City some pajanya you know mindfulness
and clear comprehension as it's often
rendered
but um just because you have a conscious
thought does not mean that you have to
have a thinker like some subject who is

thinking

because the conscious thought arises due
to the concatenation of of circumstances
you know the the conditions and and
there it is it's a conscious thought and
it doesn't need anybody to think it
it doesn't need anybody to create it
other than just these circumstances that
happen to uh

result in its existence

and that may not be a very

um satisfactory answer but it's the best

I can do at present and I'm going to

move on to the next question now and

this is from Raphael

and Raphael said I saw a monk at train

station and then asked him if I could

buy him something to eat or drink he
refused but was very pleased with the
gesture is it allowed to ask a monk if I
can buy him food if I see one
spontaneously well I think what you
should do assuming I mean if he's a
laxmonk he'll let you buy him anything
but if he's a strict Monk
you shouldn't use those terms you
shouldn't say can I buy you something
because a monk is not allowed to tell
anybody what to do with money so if you
say can I provide you with something can
I get you something without mentioning
buying or selling or money
you know just leave that entirely out

just can I provide you with something to
to eat or drink then he might have said
yes if he assuming that he was a really
strong a strict Monk otherwise maybe he
just wasn't hungry or thirsty

um

but you have to bear in mind that a monk
is only allowed to eat between Dawn and
midday and if he drinks anything

um he's not allowed to drink dairy
products in afternoon because that's
considered to be a food so that's

another Dawn to midday thing but like
fruit juices or something like Coca-Cola

I assume

um then you can drink that until the
following Dawn he can keep that until

the following Dawn and then he has to
get rid of it if he hasn't finished it
yet

so

yeah I think that might be the thing
don't mention buying don't ask a monk if
you should buy something because if he
says yes then he's breaking a rule by
having you buy something and he's not
allowed to handle money he's not even
allowed to tell lay people what to do
with their money

so maybe you could just strike me I may
I offer you something or you're thirsty
I can go get you something to drink that
kind of a thing

and monks aren't allowed to store store
foods for the next day or anything like
that either

so I think I'll just move on a nice
question here this is from White Ash
Piper

and white ash Piper says

oh wait a minute wait a minute

I've got white ass Piper asking the
exact same question as you go

ah okay I'm gonna have to uh

one moment please I'm gonna try and go

back to my q a here

and find out what white ash Piper

actually asked okay here it is white ash

Piper says can you explain the reason

for prostration

thanks Dave you're gonna
get everything back in order here okay
so I hope that uh even though I couldn't
see myself you can still see me assuming
that you even want to see me so he asks
here I gotta ask see it again here
white ash Piper says can you explain the
reason for prostration thanks Dave the
reason for prostration well basically is
to show respect to someone that you
consider to be worthy of respect and the
form that it takes of actually you know
getting down on your knees and maybe
even onto your face
is uh it's a cultural thing
it's it's pretty much a universal

cultural thing in pre-modern times that you're gonna at least get down into a kind of submissive State at least on your knees or at least bow you know you know make your head lower than the other person's head just as a sign that you know they are higher than you that you're showing respect to them you're honoring them by placing yourself in a lower position than them

um and it just takes different forms like in India it was you know you get down

um the Five Point prostration as the standard one is you squat down and then you put your hands out in front of you then you get your knees onto the floor

and then you you spread out your hands
and then you touch your forehead so the
the Five Points as I understand it would
be your knees your elbows and your
forehead

and uh westerners don't like doing that
it's I didn't like doing that when I was
a West before I became a monk it's like
getting down and bowing to somebody you
know really just getting down on the
floor you know and bowing putting your
head to the to the to the ground where
some people even put their forehead to
the feet of the person that they're
honoring

um yeah it just does not come naturally

to westerners because you know in
America for example you're taught or at
least you used to be taught that you're
just as good as anybody else
you know why humble yourself before
somebody when they're no better than you
are you know even the president
you know it's like hey Prez you know you
suck or whatever you know so
uh yeah I mean the first couple dozen
times I bowed to a mom getting it
properly you know you're really getting
down on the floor I felt really awkward
and self-conscious sort of the way I
used to feel when I would dance without
being drunk yet it was it was kind of a
strange feeling

um

so yeah the main purpose for prostration is just to show respect and it's in a way it's it helps to weaken your ego you know if you're an egomaniac you're not going to bow to anybody you're going to consider yourself to be superior to everybody but

um by humbling yourself before a spiritual person it kind of opens your heart and and really kind of weakens your your vanity or your your egoism to some degree and just the actual form it takes is is a cultural thing so I'll just move on to the next question which is the last question

the last question of this q a
and it's bought from Stevie
and Stevie says it's crazy the things
people believe yeah he was responding to
me talking about the Book of Mormon in
the previous q a
um even the things we believe about
ourselves also I'd love to know your
views regarding the Trump phenomenon but
that discussion is maybe best left to
your Discord right since it's political
and not dumb well there's dama and
everything
you know I mean
I mean that can be sort of a an easy
justification for being an information
junkie or following the news or whatever

but uh still I mean like my Discord survey it's got like a politics and current events section got a room for that

um so essentially he's asking me what are my views regarding the Trump phenomena

and uh I'm not exactly sure what he has in mind with regard to the Trump phenomena but

um I do think that uh Donald Trump was a surprisingly good president considering just that he had the ruling Elites of both parties plus you know all the the globalist propagandists and everybody just hating his guts and doing

everything they could to oppose or resist him there were a few like Lindsey Graham who kind of saw the writing on the wall he was kind of could go either way you know he was still a globalist but Trump was obviously in power so he you know he was kind of kissing his ass to some degree

um but yeah Trump was not a globalist I think that is his main problem it's not that he had mean tweets or that he's an unpresidential in crass I mean I mean some of our greatest presidents were not particularly presidential in their demeanor

and uh I mean I took the liberty once um just doing a study on all the people in

history or you know the most famous people in history that came down with the name the Great and most of them were pretty much just self-serving narcissists who at least had enough sense to know that if they wanted their name to live in glory you know for hundreds or thousands of years they should do good for their country you know they should have their people prospering and calling him the Great and Trump was like that I mean he certainly is not uh extremely wise he's he's wise in a worldly way I suppose I mean you have to have some kind of sense in order to be as successful as he was

um

but he just was not a globalist I mean
he was able to look at what was going on
with you know just all this craziness
that is increasing it seems like and
just call it out and he had so many
people that resonated with that
and I mean he was calling out
essentially a very corrupt system and so
the corrupt system just I mean they they
don't want him you know they want to get
rid of him any way possible preferably
without having to to assassinate him but
I wouldn't put past him at this point if
it looks like he might win but

um

so I think Trump was you know he was

kind of a vain narcissist of a guy but
he was a patriotic vein narcissist who
was really trying to do what was best
for his country if only because he knew
that was how he could go down in history
as a great man and he had everything
else he had you know the money and the
mansions and the Beautiful Wife and all
that

I mean all that was left really was just
sort of like the glory of being a great
leader or something and so he went for
that too largely out of you know egoism
or narcissism or whatever but
um I voted for him twice and I'll
probably vote for him again

and uh I mean one I think one of the the
main advantages of having Trump as
president is it caused the Cockroaches
to come out in broad daylight you know
it's like the propagandists they're
they're only fooling the people who want
to be fooled at this point
and uh let's see and then this is like
all this political persecution of him
which is true I mean
um I mean Donald Trump he had enough
sense to know that as a businessman you
know he had to avoid committing Major
Crimes so when they're investigating
everything he's ever done you know just
trying to find any dirt that they can
that they could take him down with you

know like the Russian collusion thing
you know they were investing in just a
wide open investigation just anything
that was in any way related to you know
what they what they were looking for you
know they could investigate that they
could just ramify out their
investigation in any way they pleased
and they didn't find anything really
serious against Trump
and I mean they have to like do run
defense for Biden
so I mean it's it's not that Trump did
these bad things I mean they're just
having to invent new felonies just to
try and get anything against him or

they're having to assume his guilt from the get-go and say that he had bad volitions when he was doing this he was trying to overthrow the government when he said this but they can't prove what his intentions were

and then Biden I mean he's bragging about doing things worse than Trump was impeached for just broad daylight in public and I mean that's okay because he's a globalist and so they're just like closing ranks and doing everything they can to protect him and they're protecting his his relatively worthless degenerate son also mainly just to protect Biden you know the big guy that gets the 10 percent

so

so yeah I'm talking politics here but I mean it does remind me sort of the direction the the Roman Republic was going before the Empire started I mean we haven't got anywhere as bad as that with like political opposition not just being you know destroyed by show trials and and indictments and so forth but you know like just being murdered in the street that kind of a thing we haven't really gotten that far yet and uh I mean it got worse than that with just like purges going like Marius and Salah you know just they're Marius gains power and he's he's like killing

off the his political opponents and then
he sort of gets eclipsed by solo who
just starts killing off you know Mary
marius's uh allies and it's just going
back and forth and it was it was just a
bloodbath and so by the time Julius
Caesar came along I mean he probably
saved Rome by turning it into
essentially a a quasi-fascist
dictatorship
and uh

yeah I don't think Trump has anything
like that in mind but they'll they'll
accuse him of it just if they think that
it'll stick and get more voters to vote
against him
but it's uh

yeah it's I've never

this is just a unique thing in American
history it's just sort of like a new low
where they're really doing Banana
Republic Maneuvers just to destroy a
political opponent

they think he can win and so you know
they're they're scheduling his trials
like the day before super Tuesday
they're trying to keep him from
campaigning obviously with these you
know pun intended trumped-up charges and
I mean they've been doing this from the
very get-go I mean within days of him
being elected president
um the first time already Democrats were

like writing up impeachment papers in Congress because they're trying to impeach him right then and there just just because they hate him with this hysterical visceral hatred and it's mainly because he is not a globalist and he's not particularly politically correct either and they just can't stand that and uh yeah I just hope that uh Trump can get elected again to really try and he was he was too naive last time he just assumed that American bureaucrats and politicians will have at least enough patriotism that they would respect the Office of the President and we've just left that behind and they're

just just going for it they're just
breaking new new lows all the time now
so I guess that's it I we end off on a
political note

and uh I guess I've answered all your
questions so or at least I I'd like to
kid myself into thinking I've answered
all your questions maybe I've just
spaced off and forgot a few to put them
on the list or something

but uh if you have any questions you're
very welcome to ask I do my best

and uh if you if you have any questions
you want to ask about Buddhism or
philosophy spirituality monasticism that
sort of thing feel free to include them

in the comments below

um or on Discord server if you have

access to that or my subscribe Star

channel if you have access to that and

look at the URL links below and consider

buying my books if you want to

and uh be happy

foreign

hello and welcome to question and answer
number 61. I am your host panio Basa
and

I don't know it's I've got excuses
pretty much at the beginning of every
video

about how so you know something's going
on and it's got me discombobulated or
something and man it's the last few
weeks I've I've said before that being a
layperson is more of a roller coaster
ride than being a monk with a monk
you're kind of going for this sort of
neutrality you know you're still gonna
have ups and downs but the UPS aren't so
high and the Downs aren't so low and

lately the roller coaster I've been on
is just is like hitting loop-de-loops
you know you're doing the full 360s
and uh not the least of which which
happened just earlier today this morning
is I no longer own my dog dingus
that some of you may remember my dog
from a previous video for various
reasons we had to find him another home
and another owner and I mean never see
him again and that's had me kind of low
because Genghis and I had a bond you
know we were Bros
and
some of you have a dog I'm sure you know
that a dog can love you with this open
just completely accepting unconditional

trust and love that is pretty common
among dogs for their masters but is rare
among humans

and

so I've been kind of in low Spirit since
then since this morning but I mean it's
been kind of like the roller coaster
ride has been hitting the really the
really like dramatic Parts over the last
several days

and uh you may get some updates onto as
to what's been going on maybe in the
future I mean not all of it is bad but
it's like

just change like radical change can be
stressful

even though you know it's gonna
eventually be changed for the better but
still just the fact that you're
undergoing the change can um
right it just increases
the this the standard [—] of
existence and in Buddhism it's called
Sankara duka it's just the duka
necessary
just to to make it through samsara you
know like brushing your teeth in the
evening unless you really are enjoy
brushing your teeth you know that's or
like back in the old days refolding a
road map just maintenance on not only
the house but on your own body you know
not just the car and the not just the

you know the big obvious vehicle but you
know the meat vehicle also

so

so I guess The Show Must Go On

so that's what we're doing here

and the first question is from Austin

and I will say as usual before I before

I answer ostrich's question before I

even read Austin's question that I can

start off saying oh I'm tired I got low

energy or something and then just the

flow of answering questions kind of

picks me up to you know just standard

question answering mode which is

generally a fairly a fairly Advanced

State of Consciousness at least it's

above a five let's say I mean just for
just for me personally
so let's do it and this question is from
Austin and Austin says how do Buddhists
articulate their ethical principles how
does one determine what is morally right
or wrong from a standpoint of mysticism
and that's a good question because a lot
of people really do not understand
Buddhist ethics at all
and there are a lot of Christian people
and even people that aren't obviously
Christian like Jordan Peterson who seem
to think that there's some kind of
problem
with ethics without God you know unless
you got some sort of

King up in heaven just making decrees
that this is going to get you into
heaven and this is going to get you into
hell that I mean it's just all is
permitted like Yvonne karamazov says in
dostoevsky's novel you know if there is
no God then all is permitted but I mean
obviously all is permitted even now
because God is letting assuming that
there is one
then uh you know all kinds of stuff
happens I mean he doesn't seem to stop
very many atrocities that I mean at
least not obviously
so

I just have to say that first of all I

mean before I get to the mysticism part
Buddhist ethics are psychological you
know I'm kind of harp away at this
because a lot of people ask questions
about you know is this morally right or
morally wrong is this action good or bad
and I keep repeating that I mean outward
actions really are morally neutral it's
it's the mental States I mean the action
can like

um what's the like magnify or amplify
the karma because it's you know it's
like you're more
persuaded or you've made up your mind
and you're just pushing through so it's
it's sort of increasing it the the karma
rather than you know if you're just like

fantasizing about doing something
then it's not going to be the same Karma
as you're actually you know put your
your fantasies into action and do it
you know it sort of strengthens your
will and then the will is karma
so it's a matter of
which is like skillful or unskillful
action Karma literally means action
um but it's it's like mental action and
Buddhism
in other Indian systems it wasn't
necessarily uh psychological that was
possibly an innovation of of the Buddha
himself who turned Karma into a mental
state

because it is essentially changing our
will

so what is morally right or morally
wrong is that which makes you more or
less conscious

and this is where mysticism comes in
also I mean any any mental state that
brings you closer to an awareness of
ultimate truth which expands your
consciousness

which you know makes you less

um you know greedy hateful and deluded
is going to be good and that which makes
you more greedy hateful and or deluded
is going to be bad that which takes you
away from ultimate truth and gets you
locked into some samsaric virtual

reality let's say

that's going to be bad

so

yeah I mean it's actually a simple

question I'm not used to having short

simple answers I always gotta like

ramble so maybe I'm sort of getting my

own way here but uh how does one

determine what is morally right or wrong

from a standpoint of mysticism whatever

mental States and accompanying physical

actions cause your mind to be more

expansive to have fewer desires to have

less greed hate and delusion less Loba

Dosa and moja which gets you closer to

nibbana which gets you closer to the

realization of Ultimate Reality that's
good

good

and that which takes you the other way
is bad and that which just leaves you
where you are is morally neutral

so I guess I'll just move on to the next
question here

this is from lieberland

and Libra lamb has the

kind of unusual question what are your

thoughts on meditation as a martial art

and I never really thought of meditation

as a martial art before I don't think it

is a martial art I mean

it can be a martial art

but I mean meditation itself in general

I don't think is a martial art although a lot of martial arts do have some kind of meditation I would guess that most genuine martial arts would have a meditative aspect just being in the present moment not letting your emotions control you know what your body is doing but just staying focused and relatively calm

like uh those of you who watched the old the old TV show kung fu with David Carradine you know I mean they're having like weapons like Spears and so forth thrown at them and you got to be right there in the present moment to either catch the spear or at least dodge it

so yeah meditation itself
is not a martial art I mean just sitting
there cross-legged has nothing Marshall
involved in it but um yeah martial arts
I mean I guess a really obvious example
would be Zen archery
where you're you're not shooting the
arrow it's just that the arrow shoots
itself
and you know it's it's more likely to
hit the target supposedly
so or any of you who've read the old
novel Shogun knows that Uh buntaro sama
the the necklace Maniac you know he's he
was one of the most interesting people
in the whole novel I mean he was just
this killing machine he killed his own

mother because she supposedly disgraced
the family

by acting improperly with another man
but uh he'd go into these trances where
he would he could hit a Target that he
couldn't even see

you know he'd just go into like this
trance and I mean he was he could not
miss it seems and so something like that
would be a meditative martial art I
suppose

and uh like I say if you're just the
Mind training of a martial art
especially just the remaining column
remaining focused in the present moment
that sort of a thing

um yeah that would that would be like
Marshall meditation I suppose
but it would be like an active
meditation and not sitting across like
it with your eyes closed Unless somehow
you're using sitting across like it with
your eyes closed as an adjunct to
martial arts like the Samurai Warriors
of medieval Japan would go to Zen
monasteries mostly rinse eyes and and
meditate
just live in the atmosphere to overcome
their fear of death
so if just sitting Crossing with your
eyes closed helps you in your Martial
Arts I guess that could be like
contributing

to a martial art anyway

I'll just move on to lieberland's next question

which is another unusual one

and that is do you think Karma could

possibly connect to genetic Evolution as

a lineage pool of potential future

incarnations refined to produce more

spiritually gifted incarnations

so I mean referring to genetic Evolution

like with regard to DNA genes and so

forth

um yeah I mean I think it's sort of like

mixing apples and oranges I mean you can

look at the world through a

materialistic point of view that does

have DNA and genes and alleles and
chromosomes and so forth and thus you
know genetic Evolution which is
gradually Generation by generation
modifying you know the sort of the
collective Genome of a species or of a
group

um and but then karma is a mental state
as I've already mentioned and the
implication is that this world is a
mental state
which

kind of deprives the genetic aspect of a
lot of its validity if this world really
is a mental state and even some
physicists are now claiming and have
been claiming ever since quantum physics

came along that this phenomenal universe
is a kind of state of mind
but I have to admit
um

like genetics really does explain a lot
it's very helpful within a some sort of
context

so so you do do I think Karma could
possibly connect to genetic Evolution as
a lineage pool of potential future
incarnations refined to produce more
spiritually gifted incarnations
gosh I mean is there a genetic element
to spirituality I think there may be
that there could be not necessarily A
spirituality Gene but I mean certain

character traits just like calmness not
being a total Hot Head

um

this sort of clarity of mind that could
have a genetic component you know going
assuming that materialism has some
validity

and um

I mean that would

um I'm not sure that being spiritual
really has survival value though I mean
it's darwinian survival of the fittest
which some people might quibble about
but it's it's a fairly good uh saying
there survival of the fittest and being
enlightened would not necessarily make
you

fit I mean you're not you're less likely
to reproduce if you're enlightened
you're less likely to fight to protect
you yourself or your family assuming
that you even have a family if you're
enlightened so

it's it's kind of a subtle question it's
it's not easy to answer so I'm gonna
have to read it again bear with me here
do you think Karma could possibly
connect to genetic Evolution as a
lineage pool of potential future
incarnations refined to produce more
spiritual carnations will Karma connects
to anything really I mean anything that
we experience is connected to Karma

so there's that too

I don't think that there's just this really close connection but I mean anymore any closer than with with anything else really because karma applies to any experience that we experience

any anything that we experience good bad or or otherwise I've been told according to Orthodox caravada anyway is the fruition of comma

so assuming that that uh genetic

Evolution as a lineage pool a potential future incarnations refined to produce more spiritually gifted incarnations assuming that that can exist in the phenomenal world and certainly Kama is

connected with that

but um yeah that's kind of a strange

abstract concept

and really it's sort of comparing two

different metaphysics

so it's kind of tricky

and so I'm just going to cop out and

move on to librelam's next question here

what are your thoughts on the idea of

animals being in harmony with nature in

a way that reflects a close connection

with the Divine like their Hardware

hardwired into it well there are a lot

of people that believe that

um even Genesis you know Adam and Eve in

the Garden of Eden there is an

implication of this

where

um you know they were in Paradise so

long as they were living like animals

you know they didn't have the ability to

go against the will of God yet you know

it hadn't occurred to them yet

so

or or like uh the Epic of Gilgamesh also

which is like the the oldest known epic

in human literature as far as I know

um where uh Gilgamesh wants this wild

man who's sort of like Samson and kidu

who lives out in the forest you know he

wants him to join him in his quest for

immortality and and kidu just he lives

out with the animals I mean he's like an

animal he's just a child of nature you
know he's Beyond good and evil or I mean
it just good and evil just don't apply
because he's completely natural
and so in order to get him to join him
he uh he's he's told by a wise man to go
and get a beautiful prostitute in town
bring her out to where ankido lives out
in the forest get her to take her
clothes off and lie down on a Flat Rock
and wait

and when in Caesar he uh becomes
overwhelmed with lust and has sex with
her and after that the animals don't
trust him anymore he has become human
so there is an idea that that if you're

like in harmony with nature that you
know you haven't committed you're not
guilty of original sin you haven't eaten
the apple of the knowledge of Good and
Evil

you're you're in this like a Divine
State and uh even nowadays like um
eckhartola in his first famous book he
was saying that animals are essentially
enlightened there's just a few
domesticated animals like some pet dogs
that have acquired like neuroses from
their owners that have fallen from Grace
but most animals are living in a state
of grace

so

so what are your thoughts on the idea of

animals being in harmony with nature in a way that reflects a close connection with the Divine Buddhism doesn't teach this Buddhism says animals are in a lower state of existence period and I'll get i'll get back to this in a later question

so Orthodox Buddhism would say no that humans have a closer connection to the Divine simply because

um you know we have more capacity to open ourselves to the divine

but it's I mean it's depends on how you look at it I suppose in a way animals they're always in the present moment especially

like I mean

the ones that haven't been wrecked by by

people like like Eckhart tolle says

um you know they're not thinking they're

not feeling guilty about anything they

did in the past they're not worrying

about the future unless it's you know

they see a lion and you know that's

danger now

until they still obviously

suffer you know they still obviously

experience dukkha but to some degree

they're always like in the present

moment they're always in a sense being

mindful although an orthodox Buddhist

would say it's not right mindfulness

like I remember a long time ago I had a

monastery I was holding something up
that the dog the monastery dog was
really interested in he wanted that
whatever it was I mean it could have
been a carrot or something I mean the
dog wants it you know until he finds out
he doesn't want
and so I told this other Manga look at
this concentration he is just totally
concentrated on that and he and then the
monk just called me reply well it's it's
not right concentration
which is true so this is really
the whole idea of animals being in
harmony with nature in a way that
reflects a close connection with the

Divine I mean in a way we're all
completely connected with the Divine
because we are just swimming in it we're
just immersing it we are saturated with
Ultimate Reality at all times and we are
we humans are have more capacity to
become aware of that but the animals
um like sub-human non-human animals
let's say
um in a way they're like babies or small
children and again you've got people
arguing both ways it's like
um the poet Wordsworth who my English
Lit teacher in college says was one of
the four greatest four giants of English
literature you know he wrote that oh the
more intimations of immortality where

you know when you're a little kid it's
like everything is divine and then
gradually you lose it and I mean there
is some truth to that it's like a little
kid sees a dandelion as a flower I mean
they can just be in a state of awe
looking at this this flower you know
they might go around picking them and
just going to give them the mamas you
know they think it's safe they're giving
Mama a treasure whereas as you get older
you just learn to just label dandelion
or weed and it's just something that's
not good you just glance at it enough
for the label to pop up and then you
have the the reaction with the label

rather than with the plant itself
and then you just you barely even notice
it you just go on with your life
so I suppose there's two hands I mean on
the one hand you're less
disconnected from Divinity as an animal
or a toddler but
you can't really it's not full
Enlightenment it's not real
Enlightenment from a terrible point of
view that you're going to have to come
full circle
that you know you leave the state of
grace and then you have to re-enter it
it's kind of from the other direction
like Ron Doss used the simile of the the
hands on the clock where I mean you

start at at like 12 which is you know
Union with Brahman you know the Sea of
God or Holiness or Divinity or Nirvana
or Dao or whatever you want to call it
and then you get farther and farther
away as you get more and more immersed
in beliefs and just some sorrow in
general you get to about the six and
then you start making your way back home
again

so animals are kind of up closer to
midnight than most people you know a cow
seems pretty close to Divinity I mean a
lot of people in India worship cows and
in a way I mean they don't break any of
the five precepts that I'm aware of you

know I mean they're they don't lie

obviously they don't steal they don't

drink

they don't murder

you might accidentally eat a bug that's

on the plants they're eating

they don't commit adultery

and just have sex to reproduce a species

so

yeah this is just kind of a conundrum

really

because in a way the answer is yes and

another way the answer is no

that they're closer to the Divine but

they're still they can't get all the way

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

less separated from the Divine than we

are as a general rule but they cannot
bridge that small Gap whereas humans
even though we may be born or culturally
conditioned to be farther from Divinity
than an animal we at least have the
capacity at least some of us have the
capacity to bridge that Gap

let's put it that way

and so uh since I kind of answered that
one I'll just move on to Libra Lamb's
next question

and Now for Something Completely
Different

what is the most number of push-ups that
you've ever done in one go

gosh

well I haven't done any push-ups in
years

but I used to do push-ups

long ago before I was a monk

and I mean the standard set was 50. I

mean I've done more than 50 I'm sure

probably not a whole hell of a lot more

than 50 and I don't remember exactly how

many but let's say

more than 50.

so his next question librelam's next

question is what is the most number of

pull-ups that you've ever done in one go

so it's like chin UPS right go like this

or maybe like this which is is harder

and the problem is I've never been good

at pull-ups partly because I've got long

arms like a gibbon ape I mean you can't even see the whole arm in this in there see how long

and I just have bad leverage because my arms are wrong also when I was young

like in in uh High School PE class

I had a number of number of strikes against me in in athletics one

I really didn't go through puberty details about 15 years old

so

um you know I'd be surrounded by Young physically young men whereas I was still a boy physically

secondly I have no depth perception I wasn't until I was in my late 20s that I

I fully realized I was told by a guy who was testing my eyes that I have no stereo vision I look through one eye at a time

so I mean any sports that involved small fast moving objects like balls I sucked at

and and finally I just didn't see the point of working my ass off just you know win anything you know if you win the basketball game all you do is you say well I won and you can say that honestly but

so I mean I was just I was never a jockey

I didn't really become mesomorphic as a male until

probably college at the earliest
so and I didn't do any pull-ups in
college that I can remember
so probably the most number of pull-ups
that I've ever done in one go and I
could have answered this in one word but
has

has as I generally do is taking way more
than than one word

um yeah it'd be gosh

maybe in the neighborhood at 10 I don't
know

I never really like Pull-Ups so I'll

just move on to the next question here

and this is from son of the father

and he's one of the few people that have

asked questions on bit shoot most of my
questions come from uh YouTube or the
Discord server and uh this is like the
only comment on the last bit shoot video
was is this from son of the father and
he says does attaining Enlightenment
correlate with or to the concept of
Eternity

so

that's I mean this is kind of a subtle
question too does attaining
Enlightenment correlate with or to the
concept of Eternity

um in a way you're attaining eternity so
I guess I mean you're tapping into
eternity like
um nibana

it's I don't think you can say that it's
Eternal in the sense of you know
existing from infinite past to infinite
future because it's just beyond time
it's Timeless it's a Kaliko
there's it's just beyond time
so that could be called a kind of
Eternity
and so to
to attain that
would be essentially attaining eternity
but um I mean Enlightenment or nibbana
can be interpreted in two ways I mean
there's ethical nibbana and ethical
sense and nibana in the metaphysical
sense the metaphysical sense according

to me Ponyo basa it's just reality

Ultimate Reality the highest truth the
absolute

the ethical sense is just becoming aware
of the absolute and that becoming aware

um you know it's it's still in time

supposedly at least going with

terravonna Buddhism Orthodox caravada

and so that itself would not be Eternal

the attainment of it you know in the

ethical sense would not be Eternal but

it's like you're tapping into a a

Timeless metaphysical state

so that you could call Eternal although

um it wouldn't be infinite time it would

just transcend time altogether

so I'll just move on to the next

question this is from sharp Rock
and sharp Rock Says looking at
purchasing a cow share which is an
arrangement where you prepay a farmer
for a side of beef in the future so they
have a guaranteed customer for the
animal before they commit to the costs
to feed and Slaughter it but doesn't the
first precept prohibit consuming animals
that were slaughtered specifically for
your own consumption what about right
livelihood and the prohibition on
engaging in the trade of animal parts
do these rules apply to laypersons
trying to follow five or eight precepts
or just monks can you clarify how

entering into such Arrangements might
not be beneficial

all right well there's kind of some side
questions here so maybe I could take
care of those first

um

like doesn't the first preset prohibit
consuming animals that were slaughtered
specifically for your own consumption

um not exactly that is a a different
rule that applies to monks a monk is
allowed to eat meat unless it's one of
the ten kinds of meat that's forbidden
by the rules of monastic discipline or
if it's raw you can't eat the meat then
unless he's possessed by a demon or
if uh you know he asks for it without

being given permission without being
sick you can't eat it then or
um if he sees hears or suspects that the
animal that that meat was killed
specifically for him then he's not
allowed to eat it either
and that applies to monk I mean if
you're a layperson and you go to a
farmer's house and you're told that this
chicken on the table was killed for this
dinner you know and we knew you were
coming we wanted to give you a fresh
chicken here it is it wouldn't be a
violation of a precept then because you
didn't encourage him to kill the chicken
you know it's just kind of a surprise

and even though it's killed for your
sake you're not bound to the rules of
monastic discipline I mean if you wanted
to be a real stickler and be a an
ungracious guest and so forth you can
say well I'm not going to eat that
because you killed it for my sake
but um
yeah so that
um you know if you just
had nothing to do with it and then they
tell you it was killed for your sake
anyway I don't think it would be against
the first precept of against killing
so let's see what about right livelihood
and the prohibition on engaging in the
trade of animal parts

um well those those are specifically for
Lay people that's like right livelihood
is is specifically for Lay people I mean
right livelihood for monks I mean you
wouldn't be buying or selling anything
um right livelihood for a monk is just
to be a good Monk

but um

right livelihood for Lay people

um it it in order to practice right
livelihood you're not allowed to sell
animals for Slaughter and you probably
wouldn't be able to kill animals uh in
order to you know like old-fashioned
butchers where they would kill the
animal and then and then butcher it

so

um but that's that's only the selling
part

so I mean if

if you're buying it that probably
wouldn't apply but

if you're encouraging somebody to kill
an animal

then yeah that would that would apply
because not only are you not supposed to
kill an animal you're not supposed to
specifically encourage others to kill
which then you've got westerners with a
utilitarian approach to ethics saying
well just buying meat I mean you're
voting in favor of the killing of
animals you're you're encouraging

Somebody That You Don't See to to kill
more animals because you're buying their
meat and they're making money from it so
that's that's sort of the gray Zone
there I mean you could argue either way
persuasively on that point I suppose but
in the Buddhist time the Buddha was
apparently okay with it he wasn't saying
not to
not that I'm aware of but if you're
actually
interacting with a butcher telling you
know you're going to pay him you know
put money into his hand for killing that
cow over there
then yeah that would probably be

um a violation of the first precept just
through just indirectly by encouraging
someone else to kill rather than
kill yourself

so the last part of this question here
is can you clarify how entering into
such Arrangements might not be
beneficial well

um you know you are encouraging somebody
to kill that cow

and cows are very nice I mean they're
relatively conscious they're they're
stupid compared to humans or even dogs
but still I mean

you know they're a conscious being you
know they're they're more conscious than
a fish for example

and uh like I said I mean they're
they're almost Saints I mean if you if
you accept the whole idea that animals
are closer to God and so forth then uh
we're feeding on Saints and we eat meat
which is kind of a weird idea
so let's see how how entering into such
Arrangements might not be beneficial I'm
not exactly sure what the karma the
karmic fruition of that would be
um

you know maybe somebody pays a hitman
to kill you or something although a
human life really doesn't balance out
with a cow's life
so it'd be something less than that I

suppose

but yeah I'm not exactly sure what the
karmic ramifications would be and it
would vary from person to person I'm
pretty sure

but just knowing that you know it's
you if it's One Step Beyond at least One
Step Beyond just buying meat at the
store where you're actually making a
deal with somebody that you you want
them to kill this animal so that you can
get half of it or something

yeah I mean you're kind of flirting with
just flat out killing and as a layperson
sometimes even flat out killing is
pretty much an obligation

yeah I mean at least with regard to like

insect infestations or parasites or
something

so

yeah I'm sorry I can't really answer
that one in just clear-cut terms but
karma is very

it's very mysterious I mean it's so
complicated I mean it's sort of like the
well I won't even I won't get into
physics I'll get into physics maybe
later but um

I mean it's so complicated and it
differs from person to person so I can't
really say exactly

uh other than it just might make you be
more okay with killing which would

encourage you to do more in the future
or encourage more in the future or some
such

so we'll just move on to the next
question here this is from the Arya
sawasti project

and the Aria sawasti project says for
the record I am not specifying any group
here

let's say you were aware of a person or
a group of people who were committing
horrendous crimes against the rest of
the world and you not only know who they
are but you have proof of this by their
writings and what they say
not speculating but actual proof not
speculation but actual proof would it be

bad karma for not making the information known or for protecting this group of people in an earlier q a someone asked you about certain groups and if I recall your answer was to expose them how would someone go about exposing these groups without being censored deleted or worse having your life ruined and finally does Buddhism offer some protection from these types of people well so again we got more than one question here so let's see uh there's a personal group of people let's say a group of people who are committing horrendous crimes against the

rest of the world and

this is kind of a simplistic way of

putting in because we tend to think in

terms of

um just kind of lumping everybody into

the same group when they I mean let's

say communists

so we can say communism is evil but not

all Communists are evil

I mean that is I mean it not like I'm

trying to shirk the issue here but it's

just it's just a fact that even though

communism really sucks as an idea and it

has caused Untold misery and there are

still people that think all we need is

communism and everything will be utopian

just completely disregarding the past

Century of failed and stagnant economies
and totalitarianism and genocide that
has occurred in the name of communism
but still there are good-hearted naive
people who are communists there are
people that are just following along
just not knowing or caring they're you
know the NPC types you just follow along
just believe what they're told you know
communism is good
that kind of thing
so I mean it's going to be a subgroup
I mean it'd probably be better to refer
to a subgroup
than a complete group even though a
subgroup is itself a group of its own I

mean it's at least it's kind of offering
some perspective

so let's see here would it be bad karma
for not making the information known not
necessarily because

just sitting there not doing anything is
karmically neutral it is ethically

neutral like for example I mean there's
examples in the text of like a monk who

just sits on a riverbank and watches a
pretty girl drown because it's against

the rules for him to swim out there and
bring her back and maybe even give her

mouth-to-mouth resuscitation because

monks aren't supposed to touch pretty
girls

so he just sits there and

um technically

so long as he's not cheering her on that she's dying or anything like that then he's not doing anything wrong you know even though he's letting somebody die and just there's I mean it's Buddhist ethics are so weird in some ways like for example from the point of view of Buddhist ethics just hard-nosed almost no practically inhuman Buddhist ethics let's say there is a terrorist who has planted a bomb somewhere in the city and it's going to kill at least a thousand people now maybe it's even a suitcase nuke it's going to kill at least 10 000 people

the only person who knows where that bomb is is that terrorist and you've got him in custody

so are you going to torture him to find out where that bomb is or you're just going to let him smirk at you until it blows up and kills all these people from the Buddhist point of view it's wrong to torture that terrorist even though if you don't torture him ten thousand people are going to die because you're not responsible for the 10 000 people he is it's his doing so he's going to get the Bad Karma for killing 10 000 people but you're gonna get the Bad Karma for torturing that one guy

if if you know if
if you torture him so
it applies for monks and and Buddhist
ethics are such that you can't really
follow Buddhist ethics perfectly unless
Europe as not just a monk but a saint
you are a saintly Monk you're an
enlightened monk then then you can do it
so

so getting back to the question
um would it be bad karma for not making
the information known no not necessarily
unless you've gotten bad reasons I mean
it depends on your your motives anything
you do with bad motives no matter how
good it looks externally is going to be

bad anything you do with good motives no
matter how bad it looks to to outside
spec Spectators it's it's going to be
good

or bad I can't remember which I just
said

so you know it's it's like your motives
if your will is good then even if it
results in disaster you haven't really
done anything wrong even though I'm not
ethically wrong anyway if somebody dies
but you didn't have the intention of
killing anyone you're not guilty of
murder I mean even like Western Law
takes that into consideration
kill someone accidentally it might still
be against the law but it's not as

against the law as you planning on
killing them for six months before you
finally do it

so

for protecting this group of people
is it good or bad karma to protect this
group of people with its nefarious
agenda

um

no I don't think that would be bad karma
either unless again you've got bad
reasons for doing it but if it's just
Universal compassion you don't want
anyone to get messed up you know
then I mean if you if Buddhism endorses
compassion for that one terrorist who's

going to kill 10 000 people obviously
it's going to endorse compassion for
people with a nefarious agenda
even if they're Communists for example
so let's see so if I mean it's better to
use a kind of
um Aikido
you know it's like the non-violent
martial art where you're you're like
incapacitating them without hurting them
something like that maybe
so anyway let's see the next part of the
question here is in an earlier q a
someone asked you about certain groups
and if I recall your answer was to
expose them yeah I mean if out of
compassion for people you're you're

spreading the word that this group is
doing these bad things and here's the
evidence

and you should protect yourselves you
should be aware of this so that you can
protect yourselves if you're doing it
out of compassion for potential victims
then you're doing something good if you
do the very same thing out of resentment
and or hatred of of the first group that
has the nefarious agenda then you're
doing something bad you know it's like
saving the frog from a snake if you save
a frog that's caught by a snake out of
compassion for the Frog you're doing
something good if you say if you do

exactly the same thing save that frog
but it's out of hatred for the snake
you're doing something bad because of
the motive your motive was your first
motive was compassionate your second
motive was was hateful so the
compassionate motive is Good Karma the
hateful motive is Bad Karma and it's the
same way with with this this group
promoting a nefarious agenda
if you are exposing them out of
compassion for you know potential
victims then you've done something good
if you're exposing them out of
resentment and hate for the group itself
you've done something bad
so it depends on on your volition

depends on your will

why you are doing it

and how you feel while you're doing it

so see how would someone go about

exposing these groups without being

censored deleted or worse having your

life ruined

um well use some subtlety use some

common sense

uh have a little bit of circumspection

you know like uh

well

yeah I mean a lot of a lot of groups are

trying to uh you know overthrow this or

that group and you know they do it with

secret cells or something or you know

they're not just blabbing to everybody
what they're doing
um just do it with with your own circle
of friends you know think globally but
act locally that kind of a thing
or or again if you really think that
it's the morally right thing to do that
it is your moral duty to do it
then well you're just gonna have to take
the risk of your life getting ruined
some people will fight for their country
or fight to protect their family and
they know they're risking not only
ruining their life but ending it
abruptly and they think it's it's worth
the risk and so they do it
so anyway here the Aria swasti project

says and finally does Buddhism offer
some protection from these types of
people the main protection is to do good
you know not be making enemies not be
making Bad Karma thereby increasing the
likelihood of bad stuff happening back
to you

that would be your main protection
um or another classic Buddhist
protection from from these types of
people is renounce the world and go off
and live in a forest where they won't
they won't see you they won't give a
damn about you

so I'm sorry if I've disappointed
the Arya sawasdi project but this is uh

I mean really it's I've given the same advice

um I found it in a strange book about Seth this multi-dimensional being named Seth who is channeled to this woman named Jane Roberts and Seth or Jane Roberts dissociating in a trance said that you will never end a war by hating War you will end War by loving peace because hate just makes more hate and so whatever you do you should have positive or at least neutral mental States while doing it because if you don't in the long run it's just going to cause more problems to come back on you like feminists you know it's like the the stereotypical feminist

maybe not the average feminist but the stereotypical one is just a man-hater you know it's like she doesn't she's not a feminist because she she wants to help women so much and she just wants to [_] over men

and I mean there are feminists like that not all of them

but there are feminists like that and so they're just making things worse they're they're just making a worse world all the way around

but uh a feminist who just doesn't have anything against men you know she just wants women to have a better situation that's fine

and if you want other people
to have a better situation and you help
them to do that with no hard feelings
against anyone then obviously what
you're going to be doing is a good thing
so I think I'll just move on to the next
question here and this is from nirmitt
and nirmitt says what's up with this
Western monks not believing in rebirth
there is no Buddhism without rebirth
well yeah there are Western Buddhists
um I think the most famous well-known
high-profile one is not a monk it's
Stephen Bachelor who I don't think he
believes in rebirth and I he debated
some European Monk on this issue it was
a fairly good debate I remember seeing

it on YouTube a while back
um you could probably find it I don't
remember the title of it or anything it
was I don't remember the name of the
monk either but Steven Batchelor debates
a monk about this very this very thing
where you know he doesn't really believe
in anything and
or at least he's kind of more inclined
to go along with Western
kind of materialistic ideas about how
samsara works
so there is no Buddhism without rebirth
well
there's different ways I could I could
address that I mean first of all the

four noble truths are true regardless of rebirth you know Duca is caused by desire regardless of whether you're gonna have uh like a rebirth after this one you know the cause of dukkha okay first of all first Noble Truth do come that we're all going to be unhappy to some degree we're all going to experience a certain amount of unhappiness or suffering or distress in life it's unavoidable so long as we're living in this world second that suffering that dukkha is caused by desire whenever you are unhappy it's because you want something you know you want things to be different than they

are you're you're like at odds with the universe

three that consequently as a logical consequence of the first two

if you want you're suffering to cease then you are craving or desire has to cease

and forth there is a path leading to the cessation of suffering and all of that can be true regardless of rebirth

even comma to a large degree is still valid even if it turns out there is no rebirth

but I mean obviously Buddhism teaches rebirth and it has taught rebirth from the beginning it could be

very it could very well be the Buddha himself really did teach all the stuff about rebirth that you see in the text that he remembered as all of his past lives on the eve of his Enlightenment and so forth are like moments before he became enlightened you know they all of his past lives Flash before him

um

so I think Western monks don't believe in rebirth largely because they are Western you know they've been born and raised into essentially secular humanistic materialism and they still think that you know like science or scientism is still valid for making metaphysical

claims when actually it really is not
science the purpose of science is not to
make metaphysical claims it's to
find regularities in nature so that you
can make valuable predictions based on
these regularities

so let's see here

yeah I think I think I've answered that

question what's up with Western monks

not believing in rebirth yes because

they're Western and they've they've been

born and raised in spiritual Siberia

um maybe they've got other reasons

though it could be that you know let's

say they were a follower of nisagadata

Maharaja who even though he was

technically a Hindu he said there's no
rebirth you just merge into Brahman
although I mean if that were the case
why wouldn't everyone just commit
suicide if you're just gonna
essentially re-enter nibana at death and
if life really is suffering then why not
just bail out immediately but there's
not very many people doing that
so

and again it's like if if somebody
doesn't believe in rebirth but they do
believe in the first Noble Truth the two
exist is to suffer then why not commit
suicide

but um and they may have their reasons I
never asked Stephen Batchelor or any

other any of the other Western monks who don't believe in rebirth so maybe if you if you know something you can ask them why don't I mean what's the point I mean if you still believe in the first Noble Truth then obviously the way out I mean you don't even have to follow the noble hateful path you can just put an end to yourself so yeah it is kind of a strange thing but it doesn't surprise me there's a lot of Western Buddhists who just vehemently insisted the Buddha taught an eternal Soul too just because of Western cultural conditioning more than anything else

so I'll just move on to the next
question here this is from bodhisatta969
and body SATA 969 says in Germany
samadhi is almost always translated as
concentration even by experienced
Buddhists isn't it more like ajan Puna
Damo describes it that in anapana city
for example thoughts and feelings should
not be taken into account and samadhi is
therefore actually a matter of
non-observance

well it's not just in Germany that
samadhi is almost always translated as
concentration in English-speaking
Nations also samadhi is translated as
concentration and in fact
samadhi the Pali word and the Sanskrit

word literally can be translated into something very close to concentration the Sam is just Khan you know the the Sanskrit or poly Sam is equivalent to the Latin con they mean together or with and the the ADI in samadhi means like placement so you're placing things together that's samadhi um so that's kind of like concentration I mean you're like a general concentrating forces on the front lines he's placing those forces together I was concentrating can can really mean to put together so I mean it's a literal translation pretty much and really concentration to me or

samadhi and sometimes it's an
alternative probably the most common
alternative rendering of samadhi into
English would just be meditation

Sometimes some asamati which is
um the the eighth step in the Eightfold
Path sometimes that's just translated as
right meditation especially by older
translators

but I mean samadhi it really does mean
I mean not necessarily concentrating
your attention but it's sort of like
self-discipline and
sort of

how do I explain it
just being aware of one thing and not
letting it stray from that one thing

that would be pretty much what what

samadhi is

um so concentration I don't have any
problems with that to say that samadhi
is non-observance

I don't I don't see it because I mean
you have to be observing something
it's not just a matter of just being
oblivious that's obviously not what what
samadhi is although some people do
believe you know you get into Jonna and
you just go into a Trans State where
you're just completely oblivious to
surroundings you don't hear the ticking
clock you don't feel the mosquito biting
your arm you don't hear the doorbell

ring or the dog barking outside you're just oblivious and they think that's right concentration and I really don't think so

but so I mean you have to be aware of something there's going to be like an object that you are aware of even if it's a formless a formless realm you know Infinite Space or something at least you have that as an object so somebody has an object unless maybe you get into fourth genre and then you're getting into sort of paradoxical states where you know sort of like the the highest of the the uh the the formless Realms is the realm of neither perception or non-perception so

you'd have neither an object nor a
non-object at that point
so personally I don't have any problem
with

um defining somebody as concentration
and I do think that it really is just
holding your mind steady
like on one object and not letting it
stray I mean when your mind is wandering
around that's not good to Modi at all
and I mean with regard to anything
there's going to be non-observance
anything that if you're observing
something you're not observing you know
pretty much everything besides that
so yeah I don't think non-observance is

really a good way of defining some money
so I think I'll just move on to
bodhisatta 969's next question
and ever since that few few episodes ago
where I did two hours more than two
hours

well let's say approximately two hours
of a video and then it turned out not to
be recording

and had to do it all over again the next
day so I'm kind of checking to make sure
that the timer's still going and
everything's working so okay next
question from bodhisatta 969

and he says

I recently watched an online Buddhist
course from a very good Buddhist teacher

but every now and then he mixes taravada
and Mahayana or Tibetan Buddhism which I
don't like that much

it was about building an altar from left
to right water to drink water to wash
offering of flowers

offering of incense offering of light

offering of perfume offering of food

is this what a terravonna altar looks

like this should be replaced every day

or is this money on a practice I'm just

a bit confused because this teacher

takes it pretty seriously which is

actually a good thing I just don't know

if you can really do it setting up the

altar recitation and subsequent

meditation as a working person with a
family

well

um I'm not exactly sure where to start
with this let's see

um

he's he's building an altar and it's
from left to right water to drink water
to wash off yeah well all of that stuff

I mean it's not going to be anywhere in
the polytexts I'm not sure if there

being any mentions at all of Buddhist
altars in the the old the strata of
Buddhist literature and terrible

Buddhism it's a cultural thing like most
Buddhist houses in in Burma

most families have an altar and they may

offer food to it every day you know
before they eat something they'll take a
little bit of it and put it in a little
cup and put it up on the Altar and then
take it back down again before the mice
and the Cockroaches or the Flies get to
it or whatever

um they'll have a little thing of water
on the altar although I've seen altars
that have the water that hasn't been
changed in possibly months with my
little lizard turds and stuff in it
so but I mean just having this exact
order of how exactly how it's supposed
to be no that's not really terrible
Buddhism unless it's a cultural thing

maybe where he studied taravada like in
Thailand or something that's the way
they did it but it's a cultural thing
it's not really

um

like Orthodox tarawana and the closest
thing I've got to an altar here is is
that up there and there's no water
offered there's no food offered no
incense or candles it's just sort of a I
don't know I mean there's a fossil
ammonite up there a little piece of a
meteorite is up there
um the Buddha statue of course and what
else is up there
you know a picture of maharaji a few
other things some little rocks and so

forth but I mean really
there there are some basic fundamentals
to an altar I mean first of all it
should be in a place that is kept
relatively sacred a place that's honored
I mean you don't just like throw your
underwear up there you know I'm like my
sweetheart I mean she doesn't really
have the kind of attitude that kind of
fully appreciate what an altar is about
and so sometimes she'll put stuff up
there that just doesn't belong up there
and I I take it back down again you know
it's not a big deal but

um

is it should be something that you feel

good and right about I mean that's
that's the main thing I mean if you
don't think that you could really hold
up your end of offering a little bit of
food every day or changing the water
every day I mean it's not necessary
just have a place that is just like
honoring dhamma
and just keep it you know
keep it relatively pure if you can you
know you don't put like really mundane
worldly stuff up there you know you just
keep it specifically for dama oriented
stuff or in case the fossil ammonite
that kind of a thing it's or the the
meteorite fragment
um

I mean it's it's sort of like a gift or
you know just something that is timeless
you know in a way it kind of symbolizes
dhamma in some small way some little
aspect of it maybe so

yeah I mean I I obviously don't and in
the Burmese they don't have this order
you know they're they're more likely to
light candles in incense and offer food
and so forth but I'm not really
um into idolatry or even

um I mean I do have like a sense of the
altar should be you know relatively pure
and you don't put like mundane worldly
stuff up there you know you don't take a
regular book off the bookshelf and just

put it up there because it's convenient
to have it out of the way up there or
something that's that's not cool I mean
I I

um like I say I'm not really idolatrous
but still I have this thing about not
wanting to put mundane books on top of
Bama books you know you've got a copy of
the Dharma para you don't put a novel or
something on top of it
this I mean it's just my own thing it's
just what what feels right or not right
to me

and so you should have an altar that
feels right to you personally
regardless of what the guy on
on YouTube or whatever is saying the

exact order of everything because it's
it's arbitrary it's just it's so long as
you know your will is satisfied with it
you know it's like it feels good to you
it feels right to you then that's good
so I think I'll just move on to the next
question here this is from Tim the
enchanter

and Tim the enchanter says
is being reborn in animal realm always
worse Karma than being born human
life of at least some of the species of
animals looks like better Karma than
being born human with severe brain
issues that prevent your Consciousness
to fully be human to put it nicely

well this reminds me of I was trying to explain to a Burmese Village person once that I mean according to Orthodox Buddhism and according to you know devout Burmese Buddhists you know you've got the 31 planes of existence that are like like steps on a ladder you know at the bottom you've got hell and the top you've got the realm of neither perception or non-perception you know animals are definitely below us deities are definitely above us and it's just like a sequence but I had this idea I was considering writing an essay about this I don't think I ever really got around to it but at the bottom at least with regard to

like the animal Realm

you know you just have it like kind of

like a small circle and then like the

human realm would be like a bigger

circle around the small circle the Deva

realm would be like an even bigger

circle around around that Circle because

it's like the best

human is better than the best dog

this I mean like the most enlightened

Saint is going to be better than the

best good boy kind of a dog but the

worst human is going to be worse than

the worst dog I mean you can have a

rabid dog or just some vicious dog

that's attacked several people they're

not going to compare with a Stalin or a
mouth

or a pull pot

and so it's like the the more advanced
the realm is is you just got more
opportunities you got more options and
some are going to choose the best
options and get way above what an animal
can do for example and some are going to
choose the worst options and they're
just going to be like total Psychopaths
and just result in this misery on just a
huge scale that no single animal could
possibly be responsible for
so in that sense

um you'd probably be better off being I
mean like a Pampered Shih Tzu living in

a mansion has a pretty good life
um they don't have many opportunities to
learn dhamma for example
but still I mean they have a better life
than somebody who is
in a dungeon or somebody with some
horrible painful you know they got
really bad arthritis or something
they've had it since they were young
they're just in chronic pain and it just
kind of prevents them from really
um you know reaching their full
potential as a human being
or they're in some political prison
being tortured or something you know
there's a lot of people in this world

that have really I mean they're really
messed up and unhappy

you know they're kind of like in a Hell
realm a terrestrial hell Realm

so yeah I mean if I had to choose I mean
some people especially like Hindus I
think would argue that

um the human at least they're really
working on like a person who's like in a
terrestrial hell realm

um at least they're really working on
major karma in this life so to some
degree they are beloved by the gods

because they are taking on such a huge
mouthful of [__] to work on

you know they're just you know they got
some horrible like

um birth defect or something
you know they're just crippled and
maimed and messed up or whatever it is
and in a way they're considered to be
beloved by the gods because they're you
know they've taken on such a huge karmic
burden that they are working on
straightening out and working on
rectifying it and clearing
so you can look at it in different ways
foreign
but personally I don't think it's always
worse to be an animal than to be a human
especially some humans that
they just cause so much misery I mean
I'd rather be I'd rather be a dog than a

pole pot

in again humans are at like a a higher
level of existence simply because
they've got more options you know
they've got more intelligence in a way
they've got certain psychic powers like
like rationality that lower animals or
non-human animals don't have
so

and of course as if someone's born
severely mentally [__] so that they
I mean they're like a vegetable their
whole life and I have actually met a
person like that I mentioned in one or
two q and A's ago who I mean he would
sit there with his eyes open but it was
obvious he wasn't seeing anybody and

there wasn't anybody inside there

it was he was essentially a vegetable

just very severely brain damaged from

birth

so I mean in a case like that

I mean at least the dog is able to see

in here and move around and respond to

his environment and so forth

so

I guess is the question is being reborn

in animal realm always where's Karma

than being born human I would say no

because I mean some people are born into

really bad situations and they've

they've got really bad karma so I mean

being born an animal might be more of a

mediocre level of karma I mean it's not really good karma but still it might not be as bad as being born into just a really horrible situation

so I mean I think that one also could be argued persuasively either way it all it all depends on how you look at it in fact I could answer every single question with the same thing it all depends on how you look at it but it would make for a pretty boring q a and pro probably most of you would stop watching it after the first one so I'll just move on to Tim the enchanter's next question here is it true that a monk can verbally ask for food if he going for alms hasn't

been given anything to eat for a few days yeah in a case like that I think you could verbally ask for food if like malnutrition or just collapsing from weakness is is becoming like a a real possibility

that you could ask for food in a case like that especially if somebody gave you Advanced permission then you can ask for food regardless but

um

yeah I mean I don't exactly recall the what exactly the rules of monastic discipline say but there are special cases in terms of like times of famine um in times of famine monks are even

allowed to like pick fruit off of trees
and eat that even though nobody's
offered it into their hands so there are
certain things that can be done and I
assume if you're really becoming it's
becoming like a danger to your health
going without food you're allowed to ask
for food because like for example a monk
who gets his clothing stolen he's naked
because his robes were lost or stolen or
destroyed or something he's allowed to
just walk up to a total stranger and ask
for some cloth to cover himself so I
assume if being naked gives you that
privilege of just walking up to a
stranger and asking for something that
uh not having eaten for a few days just

because

there's there's like a famine or

something then yeah I think you could

ask for food

so I think I'll just move on to uh Tim

the enchanter's next question

and I I watched uh Monty Python on the

Holy Grail just a few nights ago

so

one of my favorite things about Tim the

enchanter is when he's doing his rats

you can actually see the spit flying out

of his mouth

so anyway Tim the enchanter says what's

your take on kalamasuta

angodara

nikaya 365

3.65. the Buddha says in it things like
if there is rebirth in a if there is no
rebirth then B if there is comma then a
if there is no comma then B Etc do you
consider this Sutra to be part of
archaic Buddhism well the column alsuta
is it's a strange it's very different
from most sutas that you'll read
and um I mean there's there's one
refrain in here I actually have I think
it's ajan tanisro's translation
of it right here
let's see
okay
where is it
okay so it says

come columns do not go upon what has
been acquired by repeated hearing nor
upon tradition nor upon rumor nor upon
what is in a scripture nor upon surmise
nor upon an axiom nor upon species
reasoning nor upon a bias towards a
notion that has been pondered over nor
upon another seeming ability nor upon
the consideration this monk is our
teacher kalamas when you yourselves know
these things are good these things are
not blameable these things are praised
by the wise undertaken and observed
these things lead to benefit and
happiness enter on and abide by them
so let's see here gotta get everything

back here all right so I think the
kalamasuta is based on an old fragment
like that don't believe something just
because it's in the scriptures don't
believe it out of respect for tradition
don't believe it out of respect for your
teacher you know just
I think that part is very similar to the
Attica Wago or it's just saying don't
believe anything
but then like thrown in you know if it
you know if it's praised by the wise and
so forth then
um there's a lot of sort of statements
after that that sort of contradict what
he's saying when he's just saying don't
believe it out of respect for the

teacher and so forth and I mean the assumption is people are going to believe it because the Buddha is is saying it and they got respect for the Buddha so that they're going to believe what he says in violation of of what he says so

um yeah I think it may have been like an early fragment

that was similar to the antagawanga just explaining why you shouldn't believe anything and then it got turned into a longer discourse with later additions I think

and it's interesting that when you sing you know don't accept this don't accept

that it's it's all with regard to
ethical Behavior you know it's not with
regard to metaphysical beliefs or that
sort of thing it may be that at that
time even when they're
um like embellishing the sutra you know
sort of filling it out that even then
metaphysical beliefs were still not
encouraged but the ethical beliefs like
I should do this I shouldn't do that
um you know it was it was sort of
getting more of a foothold and then the
metaphysical beliefs came after that
but it is true that he's in in the
kalamasutta there is a
it's sort of like Pascal's what was it
Pascal who uh he had this the four

reasons for believing in God or
something like that it's like you know
even if there isn't a God then you know
you're still believe acting as though
there is a God so that you're going to
be a good moral person anyway you know
it's sort of like even if there isn't a
God you're still better off believing
that there is one
and that's kind of the way
um the Buddha is in this kalamasutra
there's the section where
um you know even if there isn't rebirth
now if there is rebirth and you know you
act morally in order to get a good
rebirth then you get a good rebirth if

there isn't rebirth and you act morally
in order to get a good rebirth at least
your conscience is clear you're doing
good you're you're purified to some
degree you know you're going to be a
happier better off more respected person
anyway

and similarly with thumb it with regard
to Karma

so

do I consider this it would be part of
archaic Buddhism I think that like the
nucleus of it may be archaic
and all of it may be fairly old
because at least he's not going into
metaphysical stuff it's all should I
believe this should I believe that it's

all with regard to you know ethical
conduct

so it's still not getting into
um the origin of the world or anything
like that like some sutures actually do
that are considered to be relatively
late

so okay I think I answered that one so
I'll just move on to Tim the enchanter's
next question

and that is I would like to lose some
weight through practice of fasting any
advice on how to overcome hunger
maybe Buddha in the suta said something
about practice of fasting
um yeah there's a little bit about

fasting

um you're not supposed to fast for too much because you're supposed to keep yourself healthy and energetic enough to continue practicing nama so prolonged you know continual fasting is frowned upon in terravada Buddhism although I've I've fasted quite a few times I mean sometimes I was just traveling it wasn't convenient to go for alms I was only eating almonds food at the time so I would just fast for a day or two until I was able to finally take my bowl and go through a village and get food there was a couple times when I did like a hunger strike against the village because they people were continually

setting forest fires

and so I just made it known that I do
not consider setting forest fires to be
cool

like I live by this Creek once and the
fishermen did sit Nets at night and then
they just set the underbrush on fire to
lure minnows into these little Nets

they're like little Gill Nets

and it's just it was just ridiculous I
mean just a square mile of just ashes I
mean it wouldn't go up into the Treetops
but you know all the underbrush all the
the grass and everything would be burned
up which would cause countless small
creatures to die but

Village fishermen don't think very much
and you know they're kind of making
money from killing small creatures
anyway so

um if I did a hunger strike a couple
times because of that

but uh I've totally digressed from the
question here

so I'll just read it again I would like
to lose some weight through practice of
fasting my any advice on how to overcome
hunger that's that's almost funny how to
overcome hunger the only way you're
going to overcome hunger is just to get
used to it and just not act on the
hunger and I got really good at that I
mean for me to gain weight or lose

weight is almost effortless at this point because for 30 years I was a monk I ate one meal a day and in the afternoons didn't matter how hungry I was

um I wasn't going to break the rule and eat in the evening I was relatively strict with regard to that and I didn't have any extra food anyway

so I mean it was just you just get used to being hungry and not caring you know or even if you care I mean you don't act upon it you don't just go out and have to get something to eat

so

so you just make a firm determination

aditana it's one of the ten paramis
determination that I mean you're not
going to eat more than you know

X

or in the case of fasting you're not
going to eat until you know this day
arrives and I wouldn't make it like a
really long time different people can
fast easier than others a person with a
low metabolism I met this guy he fasted
I think for it was like two weeks and he
was still going to work every day and he
seemed completely fine
but for me after like two or three days
it's like I start getting like
hypoglycemic or something it's a it's
like my energy level just kind of

plummets and you know I can still manage it so long as I'm lounging around and not exerting myself but I remember one time I was uh hiking through Orlando Caspa National Park trying to get to the place where I stayed I get dropped off in the center of the park and then hike North till I would reach near the the northern boundary and then and uh I know I'd be hiking Barefoot carrying all my stuff and I'd eat something the first morning but sometimes it would take me like three days to get there you know I'd get there like maybe the morning of the third day and sometimes by the afternoon

of the second day I mean I just start
getting I think it was hypoglycemia
where I just

I mean if I sat there and rested I felt
fine but once I got up and started
walking with my my gear on my shoulders
um it was just like my energy level
would just plummet you know it was just
like my batteries were just running dead
but again I'm totally digressing here
um any advice on how to overcome hunger
I mean you just have to have a stronger
determination than
you your determination not to eat has to
be stronger than your desire to eat
I mean if you you're thinking about
breaking the fast you just make like

at this determination I'm not going to
eat anything I'll just I'll just consume
water

or maybe tea or something that has no
calories you know until say Friday
and then you just have to rely on your
honor and your you know your your word
you have to be a man of your word and
just regardless of how hungry you are
you just don't eat

so you don't really overcome Hungary
except by just not giving into it still
going to be there I mean you still have
a body it's just naturally gonna tell
you to eat something when your stomach's
empty

but you don't have to

so let's see

um yeah so I guess I answered that

question didn't I took me a long time to

get around to it but I did so I think

I'll just move on to the next question

here and this is from Connor and I'm not

sure if this is a a joke question or not

but Conor asks me are you Swami tadat

mananda and I had never maybe I'd heard

of him but I didn't know who he was

Swami tadat mananda so I just did a

search for him earlier today

and it turns out that he's got a YouTube

channel and he looks kind of like me you

know he's got the same kind of beard the

same hair color he's a little shorter

and pudgier than me he's he wears like
orange robes and he's a vedantist
and he talks about some of the same
stuff as me but we're not the same guy
and even just the name tadat mananda

Todd means that I'm pretty sure Atman is
soul or self and and Nanda is like
Delight

so delighting in such Soul kind of is
what it means delighting in such self
which is uh certainly not my Approach
but uh we do look kind of similar
although as I say he's shorter and
puddier than me and still wearing robes
even though he's got the hair and the
beard and everything

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

Voyager

and Edelweiss Voyager says my question

is how does one take a refuge in the

Sangha during this spiritual Dark Age

Western Buddhism is a joke and a small

online community does not seem like a

valid replacement well I was in kind of

a similar predicament when I was a monk

because I was living in Burma and as

I've said before probably 98 of monks in

Burma aren't even trying you know they

don't follow the rules they're not

trying to become enlightened you know

they got their own they got their own

reasons it's just a kind of a cultural

thing and you know they're more like
Village priests than they are ascetics
striving for enlightenment and so I
really had a kind of antipathy towards
taking refuge in such fellows as the
monks I was seeing surrounding me but it
turns out that um there's two ways of
taking refuge in the Sangha three now
that you got like Western secular
terrible Buddhism

what the first one of course is taking
refuge in Monks which is traditionally
what lay people are supposed to do at
least lay people that don't call
themselves Sangha which is what happens
in the West

then the second kind is what monks are supposed to do and that's taking refuge in the Arya Sangha so all of those who have become enlightened or at least they're well you know they're well on the way to becoming enlightened um you take refuge in them even though you might not have any have any around that you're aware of and then of course nowadays in the west when people take refuge in the Sangha they're just taking refuge in their own meditation group where people come once a week and meditate for an hour or something so how does one take refuge in the Sangha

um

taking refuge in the sanghas is essentially taking refuge and it's like an abstraction I guess you're taking refuge and all the people who are striving for enlightenment even if you don't have any idea who they are they're out there

but uh as a layperson you take refuge in the monks

because they were the the conveyors of wisdom at the time they didn't have books back in those days in India so you relied on the monks to teach you dama

um

and also you supported them which was

Merit for you and helping somebody to
get enlightened even though you yourself
as a layperson may not have been in a
position to strive for it yourself
so how does one take refuge in the
Sangha it's sort of like taking refuge
in the Buddha I mean the Buddha's not
here the Buddha died a long time ago
so how can you take refuge in somebody
that doesn't even exist I mean you can
take refuge in his teachings with us
taking refuge in Damas not taking refuge
in the Buddha
so I I kind of wrestled with that one
too how do you take refuge in the Buddha
when you know he's not he's not even in
this world anymore he's not in this

universe anymore

so it's with the song I'd be similar I

mean it's just those who have done it

even though you might not know any

that's I mean it's kind of abstract but

then taking refuge in the Buddha is kind

of abstract too taking refuge in the

dhamma is kind of abstract

so if you're not comfortable with

abstractions you might have a difficult

situation there

but that's that's essentially how I did

it that there have been Saints in this

world

and uh I take refuge in in their

saintliness

or just the fact that they did it so
other people can do it too
so I'm sorry if that's not an adequate
answer but that's the best I can do and
I really I can't sympathize because I've
been in a similar situation
so next is I mean I was never really one
to heavily put a lot of emphasis on
taking Refuge anyway
although Interstate refuge in in dhamma
I mean that I mean you have immediate
access to that you might not have
immediate access to the Buddha or
immediate access to a saint or even to a
monk but you do have immediate access to
Domo and that's the important one
so I'll just move on to the next

question here this is from Baba aui

and Baba aui says

I've heard you provide a reasonable

critique of the concept of a sodapana as

commonly conceived I wonder if you have

an alternative model or map of

Enlightenment with regards to stages or

whether you think it's just binary for

example either awakened or unawakened

and no in between well actually I'd have

sort of the opposite of that where it'd

just be like a spectrum

and I mean you have people that are more

opaque spiritually opaque no light

shining through them at one end I don't

think you could have totally opaque

because then you'd have just like a
vampire or a zombie or something you
know just to be a conscious human there
has to be at least a teeny glimmer of
light coming through even if you're a
like a a sociopathic serial killer
and at the other end it would be just
spiritually transparent lights just
shining through you like you're a
crystal or something
um and again I'm not so sure that within
the context of
of samsara you're gonna have one 100.00
percent
transparency there's always going to be
a certain amount of translucency
so

yeah it might be a spectrum like that
and Enlightenment itself is is sort of
like a paradox uh it's what's the other
good riddle word it's a riddle
and it might not even really
be a valid state within a samsara
context

Buddhism deals with that a lot
that there is Enlightenment but there's
really no moment of Enlightenment or
nobody who gets enlightened kind of that
that sort of zen-like riddle type of
stuff

and I I do think that there is some
truth to that
but

um there is an alternative

um schematic of like advancement from

like Normie to

Laura hunt in terrible Buddhism and

that's it's three stages you got the

putugion on the common worldling you've

got the seika the one in training or or

like the the lower three stages of

sainthood and then you've got the asika

the one who is no longer in training and

that's the fully enlightened being and

it's interesting that Saint John of the

Cross who was a Catholic a discussed

Carmelite monk came up with the same

system or at least he endorsed the same

system probably totally independently of

terrible Buddhism but Saint John of the

Cross taught that you've got the
beginner

then you've got the Adept and then
you've got the perfect which surprised
me because he was a Christian and
Christianity says nobody's perfect even
Jesus denied being perfect

but apparently according to these
discounts Carmelite contemplatives you
can reach the stage of perfection
so the beginner is anyone who hasn't
mastered contemplation

once you've mastered contemplation where
you can just sit there not thinking
anything your mind is completely clear
like glass just transparent that's

called high contemplation for a Catholic
contemplative

when you can do that at will when you
have mastered that then you become Adept
and then when you have completely
mortified yourself well when you just no
longer have any more will of your own
that you're acting entirely through the
will of God you become like a puppet of
God

then you are perfect

that you're you're consistently acting
in accordance with the will of God

because you don't have any will of your
own anymore

and that's very similar to what terrible
teaches like the arohaunt no longer has

any will he doesn't make any more karma
and Karma is cheating out or will
so I think the teravada and Saint John
of the Cross would differ on where you
make the cut off to the uh the Seiko or
the Adept because

um you wouldn't have to be

um

like a master of at least second genre
in order to be

um an aria

so

that's I think I prefer that schematic
to the four stages of sainthood which I
do think is an anachronism and it got
invented later on

so but still I do think it's it's
probably better to just think of it as a
Continuum I mean in Buddhism you could
say that when you've had your first
glimmer of nibano your first glimmer of
the absolute or of ultimate truth then
that you're you're an arya at that point
and then when you no longer have any
greed hate or delusion you know you're
just you're just sort of aware of
Ultimate Reality all the time
um that wouldn't be Orthodox Buddhism
but that's how I would interpret it then
you would be enlightened
so I hope I answered that one so I'm
just going to move on to White Ash Piper
and his question here which is I heard a

story that a Buddhist monk was ripping
on Alan Watts to his roshi Suzuki Suzuki
replied to him leave him alone he's a
bodhisattva I'd say the same is true for
you what say you paniobasa I know that
to say one is this or that is a
disqualifier possibilities are ways
permissible
not

possibilities are ways permissible

I don't fully understand that part but I
can say that according to The Diamond
Cutter Sutra I am a bodhisattva because
it says in The Diamond Cutter Sutra the
what the vajra cherica pragra paramita
Sutra that anyone who can read that sutra

which is itself an anachronism because
the Buddha is saying this and they
didn't have reading sutras in the
Buddhist time but whoever could read
that Sutra and not be filled with like
alarm and Dread

is a bodhisattva and I like The Diamond
Cutter Sutra so I read The Diamond
Cutter suture and liked it and I was not
filled with alarm and Dread and
therefore according to The Diamond
Cutter Sutra I'm a Buddhism
and who knows it's possible maybe I was
like Japanese in a previous life and I
took bodhisattva vows then and they
might still somehow apply even though I
haven't taken them in this life and

don't plan on it because I really don't think it's that good of an idea to postpone Enlightenment until all beings are liberated when I mean it's been an infinite amount of time to get us to this point the universe is beginningless and still there's an infinite number of suffering beings which indicates you know that it's unlikely that all beings are ever going to be saved so by taking the bodhisattva path you're essentially postponing Enlightenment forever which is pretty much the opposite of what the historical Buddha was advising people to do which is get yourself enlightened In

This Very life if at all possible
so I guess I answered that question
so I'll just move on to the next one
I'm tempted to say more about that much
like no I won't say I mean it wasn't
really the idea of being a borisatva or
a buddhistata in Pali is more like was
it was I am I really an Arya kind of
stuff it came up for for a while many
years ago anyway the next question is
from Titus d ascentis
and uh I think he's the last person
asking questions here he's got two
questions and one of them is really
Humdinger it's really a long one
so I even I even like edited off some of
the stuff that wasn't really on germane

to the question here but still it's a long one

so I'll just uh wade into this question from Titus Dia sentis and he says you obviously grasp a lot of physics biology and cosmology Concepts very well I would argue that Zen Buddhism

that's parentheses Zen Buddhism together with stoicism physics and biology is the current Pinnacle of human thought you could include psychology here there obviously are some great thinkers in that field too but it is today like medicine itself completely hijacked by dangerous hacks and or political maniacs Einstein realized that this universe has

only one dimension the space time where
more precisely the universe is a
space-time Continuum there is no
backward movement not spatially nor
Temporally this is fundamental
everything from an electron to a Galaxy
including this Earth and the Sun waves
on the ocean your ear and the Annoying
mosquito moves forward direction is an
illusion relative to The Observer he
explained all this and proved it
mathematically but that didn't stop
hordes of string theory physicists to to
this very day and into unforeseeable
future build their careers on trying to
prove their calculations on how many
extra Dimensions Universe has besides

the basic descriptive four three spatial
plus time

usually ranging from 11 to 26. is this
really cognitive dissonance or simply a
professional must for they wouldn't for
they would be out of a job if they
admitted the truth

perhaps something similar can be said
about many spiritualists philosophers or
gurus who continue to argue on and on
about what Buddha said meant did or
didn't do don't even get me started on
how many robes can a monk own
consider this scenario a Buddhist a
Buddha realizes the truth the one
ultimate truth then he sees that laying

down on people would be not just
difficult to explain but also divisively
questionable as the path from starting
to dwell
on this ultimate
concept before finally accepting it can
for many turn out to be a rather
depressing feat so then one Buddha
considers the effort not worth it and
decides to just forget about it and get
on with his life one Buddha decides to
incorporate the ultimate truth into
folklore and mysticism another Buddha
decides to weave the ultimate truth into
an existing philosophy or worldview all
that doesn't stop hordes of disciples to
found various schools with countless

forms of rules explanations and
teachings cognitive dissonance a
professional must

Zen Buddhism tries to cut it all down to
the bone but it too over the centuries
got institutionalized and over
ceremonialized there are however many
examples of Zen Masters who got through
to the essential wisdom stripped all the
poppy [__] away and without an
imperative tried to pass it on to some
student in most simple but sometimes
quite devious ways think humor or art
here here's a devious question if two
Buddhas exist at the same time on this
Earth and we many and met each other

what do you think they would talk about
or more interestingly put what question
do you think they would ask one another
so that's the question here or small
group of questions and I mean getting up
to the top part here where you're saying
that Einstein proved that there are only
four dimensions the three three spatial
Dimensions plus time

um really I don't think that he did
because you can't prove anything with
regard to the external world I mean
um Hume did a lot to prove that and Kant
kind of did

um Spinoza sort of did with regard to I
mean you can't be sure about what is
outside your own mind there's always

going to be a certain uncertainty
at the very least is to put it nicely
so I mean Einstein's math probably works
out fine but math is I mean it's not so
much proving the external world it's
just coming up with like models that
superimpose on it satisfactorily
that that's how science or especially
like the mathematical aspects of physics
and probably chemistry also work it's
like they don't discover a law of
physics that you know everything has to
obey they just come up with a kind of
mathematical formula that seems to
account for what the what scientists are
observing

so

yeah I don't think that Einstein really proved that there's no more than four dimensions I don't believe that there are only four dimensions I think that there are

like potentially

you know any number of Dimensions but none of them are ultimately real because they do don't really apply to the absolute or nibbana or God or Dao or Brahman or whatever you want to call ultimate truth

that the ultimate truth is just it Tran it contains within all possibilities and you can at least imagine that there are more than four dimensions

so it would probably contain that also
it would seem to me

um

so let's see here he gets down to
the string theorists the hordes of
string theorists

um are they it's is this really
cognitive dissonance or simply a
professional must

for they would be out of a job if they
admitted the truth I guess that's the
first question here so I'll make a gap
between that and what follows

I just did that you didn't see me make
the Gap but I did

um

yeah I don't think that it's cognitive
dissonance

um it's not necessarily a professional
must either I mean it's well known that
Einstein

um you know he he was instrumental in
coming up with both

relativity and quantum theory but they
don't fit together very well

and that's that's always been a problem
for physics ever since Einstein came

along in that the two main accepted

um theoretical paradigms you know

relativity and quantum physics they

don't exactly fit together you know

there's certain anomalies and so forth

that they just don't fit together and so

you got the the grand unified theory
hasn't been devised yet
and it may never be devised
so you've got these string theorists who
are you know they're trying at least to
get like a unified theory that accounts
for everything where you don't have to
rely either on relativity or quantum
physics that the entire Theory would fit
together and and it would explain things
um that's not to guarantee that after
they come up with that and everyone's
slapping each other on the shoulder and
congratulations for finally coming up
with the grand unified theory there's
some wise guy in India for example is

going to come up with a different Grand unified theory making different kinds of statements with different math that works equally well

because just these conceptual models superimposed upon the phenomenal

Universe I mean that's really all it is and the ones that fit the best are the ones that are accepted as laws of physics or whatever

so let's see

yeah I don't think that it's cognitive dissonance necessarily that's not necessarily a professional must either I mean if they come up with a system that satisfies the the scientific dogmatists well enough then uh yeah something like

string theory might become obsolete

um so anyway

uh the next part of the question here is

perhaps something similar can be said

about many spiritualist philosophers or

gurus who continue to argue on and on

about what the Buddha said meant did or

didn't do don't even get me started how

many robes can a monk own well from the

terrible Buddhist point of view it's

pretty straightforward he can he can

keep three

um any extra robe beyond that he has to

get rid of within 10 days

unless it's he's got Katina privileges

which is

if you don't know what patina privileges are that's it's fine and during the time of the Katina privileges he can keep as many extra robes as he wants but when the Katina privileges expire he's back to three

so let's see consider the scenario a Buddha realizes the truth

um

I guess when I was to read the whole thing over again here he says present Buddhism tried to cut it all down to the bone well go to My Buddha did that also and then it's just too scary I mean you've just got this void because um both archaic Buddhism and like Zen at its best you don't have conceptual

models I mean you transcend the
conceptual models you realize that a
conceptual model is like a hair unto
vast space as one zen master put it
um

so

yeah I mean go to My Buddha just let his
followers do a cliff and then he jumped
off and then Cliffs are scary and so you
got

especially scholar monks kind of backing
away and justifying backing away by
saying you know the cliff isn't really
there or is you know it's just sort of a
a metaphor or something and then you
have people like nagarjuna who go right

back to the Cliff's Edge again and go
right back to no more metaphysics no
more speculation

you know don't believe anything just be
here right in the present moment and
then of course later majama Buddhist
philosophers start backing away from the
Cliff's Edge again Zen Masters is the
same way

so

um

yeah

so let's see let's just continue
scrolling down here

okay if two Buddhas exist at the same
time on this Earth and met each other
what do you think they would talk about

well first of all according to tradition
you can't have more than one Buddha at
the same time on the same Planet but
let's just set that aside we're just uh
arguing for the sake of argument here
that two Buddhas exist at the same time
on this Earth they meet each other what
would they talk about I'm not sure
because it would depend upon their
personality traits I mean a Buddha is
still a fully enlightened Buddha
presumably still has personality traits
and so you know they're going to be two
people what they would talk about is I
mean how can you even predict what two
fully enlightened beings are going to

talk about maybe the weather maybe they
just won't say anything

but I mean for

for like ordinary people who have never
met a fully enlightened Buddha to

speculate about what two fully

enlightened Buddhism would talk about I

mean it's sort of like a dog trying to

speculate about what people would talk

about I mean it's just it's futile

utterly futile to even make an attempt

to know what two Buddhas would talk

about

I mean if I there is the idea I mean if

there's two Buddhas and they're alone

together I mean there's nobody even

there

so and from that point of view they
wouldn't talk about anything
because there wouldn't be anybody there
it's sort of like the tree falling in
the forest

I feel like two Buddhists have a
conversation and there's nobody there to
hear it do they converse at all
and I think there's a good chance the
answer is no

so or here more more interestingly what
question do you think they would ask or
another again if unless there's somebody
listening that I mean they might not
even be there

so

I guess I'll just move on to uh
move on to uh Titus theosynthesis next
question which is the last question of
this q a
by golly
unless maybe like one is tied to a rock
and thrown through my window or
something and then I'm don't even
guarantee that I answered such a
question
because really questions about dhamma
should be asked respectfully
so don't don't even consider that
so anyway Titus the ascentis says
you mentioned a few examples of people
who got enlightened while doing
something other than Buddha sitting

under the tree or that Army doctor from
the koan in which he sat meditating on
why he was treating soldiers who would
heal and then return to battle to die
can you name a few examples of people
who got enlightened while sitting and
doing nothing well if you read the
polytext most of the Buddha's disciples
became enlightened while sitting in
meditation I mean you're not exactly
doing nothing unless then nothing
happens right when you be right when you
become enlightened because otherwise
your mind has to be doing something you
know that's just the Relentless force of
karma

shoving you forwards through life

so

a few examples of people who got

enlightened while sitting and doing

nothing

well

if that means just sitting in meditation

yeah I think you there's so many of them

that are mentioned in the text

um like anguli Mala you know he was the

he was a serial killer who got converted

to Buddhism by the Buddha and he became

a monk and diligently practiced and in

most cases according to the text if

you're going to become enlightened

you're going to become enlightened while

sitting in meditation pretty much like

the Buddha did because he was teaching others how to do essentially what he had done

um like the famous case of gotika who I think I mentioned in the previous q a he died while just literally dying while I'm just lying on a cot with his throat cut because he committed suicide and became enlightened at the moment of death there's another Monk mentioned in the wisudi Maga who burned to death and became enlightened at the same time while being tied up so I mean he couldn't do much even if he wanted to not not physically anyway it's it's just a strange story of

um endorsing following veneer rules
written no matter what you just no
matter how ridiculous it might seem you
just follow the rules absolutely
strictly so what happened with this monk
is he was living in a forest and some
Bandits came through they robbed him
took what literally owned I suppose and
then used living Vines to tie him up and
then as they were leaving they
accidentally started a forest fire
and so he could have gotten free by
breaking the vines because and he could
have at least uprooted them but it's
against the rules for a monk to damage a
green plant and so he just let himself
burn to death rather than Break Free of

these Vines and so he and then he became enlightened at the moment of death

um there's another story I think it's in the dhamapada commentary of a monk who is just getting who got beaten to death yeah he got beaten up really bad and then just died of his injuries and became enlightened as he died in that case it's kind of an interesting story about

um a jeweler among goes to visit a jeweler and the jeweler

um

he's he's got this big Jewel sent to him by a king the king wants him to make a setting for this Jewel and the at the

time the the the jeweler was like
preparing meat for a meal so he's like
getting dinner ready and he's got like
raw meat on his hands and he accepts the
jewel into his hand and he immediately
sets it down and goes to wash his hands
but the jewel already has like blood on
it or something and there's like a big
pet Crane or stork or something

I think it's a crane that sees the jewel
with the blood on it and thinks it's a
piece of meat or something and swallows
it and then the Jeweler comes back and
all of a sudden this huge jewel is gone
you know this king's Jewel and you know
he's filled with Dread because he thinks
he's gonna he's gonna have his head cut

off for stealing this Jewel or something
so the only other person in the room was
the monk so he just assumes the monk did
it he asked the monk the monk denies it
he asks him well what happened to it
then and the monk doesn't want to say
that the bird ate it because he knows
the guy will kill the bird to get the
jewel back

so I mean he won't say and so that just
makes him look even more guilty so this
Jeweler just starts pounding on him he
just beats him up

um and then finally the the bird it's
it's it likes blood apparently and
there's blood on the on the Monk's face

and the bird comes to kind of try and
get some of it because it likes blood
apparently

no telling with cranes or storks or
whatever and uh the jeweler in his Fury
just kicks it out of the way and it just
falls in a crumpled heap on the other
side of the room and then the monk asks
is the bird dead

and I think uh the Jeweler says yeah I
was dead all right and then he doesn't
have to save his life anymore and he
says well the bird ate it so the Jeweler
cuts it open and of course he's
completely mortified because he just
beat the hell out of the saintly Monk
um because he thought the monk had

stolen it and then at the end you know
the Moral Stories you know the monk went
to heaven and the the Jeweler no the
monk uh he he became enlightened he
entered nibana his the jeweler's wife
was trying to get him to stop beating up
the monk she went to heaven for her
compassion and the Jeweler he uh he went
to hell of course because he just beat
the [__] out of this sailing Monk and I
don't remember what happened to the to
the bird but I think the bird had some
special fate uh in store for it as well
so uh yeah I mean you can't really
be doing nothing you're always doing
something you know at least mentally

and so long as you're conscious and not
fully enlightened once you're fully
enlightened all bets are all off I mean
there's maybe nobody there anymore but
um yeah you're always gonna be doing
something

but if you just mean physically you're
just sitting in meditation yeah if you
read the the poly text most of the
Buddhist disciples probably became
enlightened while sitting in meditation
um I really can't speak for Mahayana
Buddhists because they're not even
supposed to become enlightened anyway
so

yeah I mentioned Ramana maharshi who is
a Hindu but he supposedly became

enlightened while just lying flat on his
back motionless not not even thinking
and that's how I became enlightened
because he stopped thinking and it just
clicked

so

I'm sorry I can't I didn't come up with
a longer list of names than that but
probably most of the Buddha's disciples
um became enlightened maybe some of the
really Advanced ones who just needed the
slightest little nudge they just need to
hear the right few words to just
you know like a like a yellow leaf just
needs the slightest nudge just knocked
it from the tree

um a lot of them were like that I

suppose you know like

um venerable sorry puta according to

tradition became enlightened while just

standing behind the Buddha Fanny and all

the Buddha was talking to a non-butist

aesthetic

um but a lot of them became enlightened

just from sitting in meditation this as

the Buddha did

at least according to tradition

and uh we're done

so I hope those of you ask questions got

your questions answered at least

somewhat satisfactorily

um if I've been kind of on a low Vibe

today

um please uh bear with me I'll probably
be feeling better later

and uh if you have any questions you're
very welcome to ask questions

um probably the the most obvious

immediate place to answer them or to ask
them would be in the comments below this

video and uh feel free to check out the

URL links and uh order my books if you

are so inclined and uh be happy

hello and welcome to question and answer
number 62. I am your host panio Basa
and those of you who watch the previous
q a may recall that I began that one
saying that I was in somewhat Low
Spirits

and it's still kind of happening
but the thing is as I've I've said this
before and it's been this way my whole
life including the entire 30 years that
I was a monk and uh just a meta daily
meditator

in fact I was looking at Q a number
seven uh still a monk and it started off
pretty much the same way where I'm
saying that this by Nature I mean from a

biological point of view it's genetic it runs on both sides of my family that my Consciousness expands and contracts like the Buddhist Cosmos and there's not necessarily an obvious cause for it externally you know it's you can just say it's some sort of internal Rhythm or something and I've been in a rather contracted phase and when I was when I'm in a contracted phase like when I was a monk it's like dhamma isn't of much interest to me I can't meditate worth a damn when I'm in an expanded phase then it's it's very enthusiastic and I can meditate almost effortlessly so I think I mean it's not the same as being unhappy being in a

contracted phase but it's like when
you're in a contracted phase you have
fewer mental options I guess but I guess
also being contracted is less joyous
than being expanded

it's just the way it is it's like

um you know no is a contraction yes is
an expansion so I guess I'm in more of a
no mode lately but the show must go on
and so I'm going to commence answering
questions to the best of my ability
and the first question is from keep the
vinia

and keep devinia says

have you heard about the book in the

Buddha's words by bikubody if yes is it

good well yeah I've heard about it I think I might have even seen a copy of it I might have even flipped through the pages a little bit

um but I haven't read the whole book I haven't I don't recall reading more than just a few words of it is assuming that I did have the book in my hand and I was flipping through it

but um

I assume that it's good

um bikubody

I mean despite his his leftist politics is one of the best translators of Pali into English that we have nowadays and um probably the book is just a standard selection of you know basic Buddhist

texts presenting in uh translation from
the ancient Pali into Modern English you
know just basic Buddhist tenets
um orthodox Theravada
so uh yeah it'd probably be a fairly
good introduction or reminder of basic
Buddhist teachings
um just as found in the Pali itself
so

I guess I'll I guess I answered that one
I mean I can't really say all that much
considering that I haven't read the book
so we'll just move on to the next
question and this is from Rui
and Rui says hello Ponyo could you
expound on the teaching or notion in the

scene just the scene

Etc

um yeah

I will and in the scene there will be only the scene and the herd there will be only the herd comes from one of my favorite sutas it's I consider to be one of the most important sutas in the polytopitica which is the Bahia suta which is

udana 110. and let's see here I actually have a translation in the entire suta in this this book that that I wrote some years ago

and uh the part that he's talking about I suppose I should give just a little synopsis of the suta there was uh

a non-buddhist aesthetic named Bahia
which literally means outsider
or like Forerunner or something and uh
he wore a garment made of bark like tree
bark although it could have been like
the the fibers on the inside of the of
the tree not like the Crusty hard
outside stuff
and um he he hears about the Buddha
and so he immediately once he hears that
there's this enlightened being called go
to My Buddha he just packs up what
little stuff he's got and just takes off
walking and he just keeps going until he
finds the Buddha and the Buddha's
walking for alms at the time and so

Bahia is standing there in the road
asking the Buddha to teach him and the
Buddhist saying now is not a good time
because I'm going for alms but Bahia
just says you nobody knows when we're
going to die I certainly don't know
please tell me now
so finally the Buddha
standing there in the in the road in I
think it was the uh the city of sawati
he says as follows
let's see well then Bahia thus should
you train yourself in the scene there
will be only the scene in The Herd there
will be only the herd in the felt there
will be only the felt in the mentally
sensed there will be only the mentally

sensed just so Bahia should you train
yourself and since Bahia in the scene
there will be only the scene in The Herd
there will be only the herd and the felt
there will be only the felt and in the
mentally sensed there will be only the
mentally sensed from that you Bahia are
not thereby and since Bahia you are not
thereby you buy ya are not therein and
since Bahia you are not therein but you
Bahia have no hear no Hereafter no
between the two just this is the end of
unease

and it's like a thin colon It's very
pithy and concise and also kind of
mysterious like a riddle almost

but uh bahi upon hearing this it was exactly what he needed to hear and he became enlightened and then before he left town I mean he's still out there on the road he gets killed by a young cow he gets like gored and trampled or something the cow kills him and then uh if I recall correctly I suppose I should have just looked in the book when I had it open um the Buddha has some of the monks go and get bahia's body and cremate it because he had become a noble one he had become an Arya even though he wasn't um a Buddhist monk so

let's see here what could I expound on
the teaching or the notion in the scene
just the scene

um well essentially what hoodie's
teaching is in the scene there will be
only the scene in The Herd that will
only the herd is you're just taking what
is presented to you and not elaborating
on it so that you remain in the present
moment just right here right now as RAM
Das used to say be here now and you're
not like having this running commentary
interpreting it you're not even like uh
attributing like symbolic meanings like
words or anything to what you're hearing
what you're seeing

and by doing that
um it's like you're
uh like deconstructing your own personal
song sorrow you're not building the song
sorry you're not like interconnecting
what you're seeing with what you already
know or what you've already heard you
know that's that's sort of how it works
you're but you see something and it just
gets integrated into your body of
knowledge so there's this whole web of
connections and associations and so
forth and that's like reinforcing
samsara for you and so what you're doing
is you're just accepting just the bare
data as much as you are capable of doing
and it's like

you know it's sort of like disconnecting everything you're not adding to this this elaboration of papancha which which is essentially samsara it's it's you're dealing as much as possible with the bare data and not adding this symbolic perceptual meaning to what you're experiencing and this perceptual meaning is essentially our own personal samsara so you're freeing yourself from some sort in that sense in this talk about their buy and they're in is with regard to connections and conclusions that you just disconnect you know there's there's no more connections and conclusions at

least when you're in that state
and you're still able to function in an
enlightened you know appropriate manner
when you stop thinking and you're just
like right there in the present moment
so I mean it is kind of counterintuitive
but I mean that is how you become
enlightened according to the Sutton
so

yeah you have you have no here no
Hereafter no between the two because all
meaning you know the meaning of here
like this world the meaning of the next
World know between the two it's just
this all like deconstructed just bare
Consciousness essentially
I don't know if I've explained that in a

way that is uh comprehensible

but uh I think I'll just move on to the
next question and if you if you have the
book essays in terravada Buddhism
written by panyabasabiku

which is who I used to be then you can
read the entire thing and there's a
little bit of commentary in there too
so you might understand it a little
better if you ponder it you know use it
as a koan or something because it is it
is pretty much of a koan

the Zen Buddhist did not invent Cowans
you can find them in the old polytext
occasionally

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

question and

I'm not sure if this is really a

question I don't see any question marks

here

but

man this is a long one okay

all right there's kind of a question at

the end so this is from Titus D assentes

and he wrote a comment in the previous q

a about Einstein saying that the

space-time Continuum is only one

dimension and I didn't fully

I didn't fully follow his argument

and so you know I'm saying that Einstein

was saying that there are four

dimensions but he's saying no there's

only this one Continuum of the dimension

and I'll get to that it's it's this is
sort of a follow-up to it to a question
from the previous q a so anyways Titus
Dia sent this says respect panyabasa I
am afraid you misunderstood me the
universe reality Quantum field space
time continuum whatever you may call it
does not have four dimensions it is the
one all-encompassing dimension
traditional four-dimensional system is
our way of describing our motion through
the reality as we perceive experience it
Universe does not have nor did it ever
have Dimensions not in the way we
conceive them it is the undividing
dimension itself

it is not expanding it is ever flowing
and since it is one it has only One
Direction so there is no backward left
right or any other kind of motion except
forward our concepts of directional
motion come from the perceived effects
of being in and dealing with the
universe and everything in it relative
to ourselves but the universe is one one
directional there is not this is not
optional

it is what it is I think Einstein and
the Buddha realized this each in his own
way so the wordings are apparently
different but in the end still with the
same meaning as the concept cannot be
grasped in any other way this

fundamental truth reveals the essence of
all things people usually have trouble
explaining like causality the flow of
time Karma emptiness and form entropy
I'm actually having trouble explaining
to myself how no one around me seems to
understand this maybe no one wants to in
the end maybe it is cognitive dissonance
for you see when you read my last post
or read my last post you started okay
with Einstein realized that this
universe has only one dimension the
space time by the time you got back to
it you started your reply by getting
back to the top here where you say that
Einstein proved that there are only four

dimensions I really don't think this is
a case of misreading or misunderstanding
I think this is mine trying to defend
end itself from a weird concept it
considers potentially harmful to Itself
by going into a cognitive dissonance
mode disclaimer nothing I said here was
meant to be a disrespectful way and
personifying the universe as a deity and
then debating on what hats should his
favorite creatures wear seems as
ridiculous as competing
whether 11 or 26 dimensional
mathematical Theory would describe the
Universe best so to me string theorists
hold as much Cosmic importance as
telephone cleaners

uh

okay so then he kind of asks uh oh A

Hitchhiker's Guide to Galaxy reference

okay anyway I had in mind a few thoughts

questions concerning some Concepts found

in the books by Carlos Castaneda and

their possible counterparts in Buddhism

but first things first are you or to

what extent familiar with his work so at

the end of the stuff about Einstein he

asks about my familiarity with Carlos

Castaneda but first I need to get back

to this Con this idea that the universe

is a is just one dimension so Einstein

says that space and time form the form

this continuum

and I mean even before Einstein space
was considered to be a continuum
so I mean you could say well even before
Einstein space was one-dimensional but
really it's it seems to me that strictly
speaking

it's not one-dimensional I mean if
you're dealing with this Cosmos I mean
we're not dealing with a mystical State
we're dealing with the empirical
universe and that's what Einstein
apparently I mean Einstein as far as I
know was not a Mystic
he was trying to describe the empirical
universe

and Dimensions I mean it's

how do I how do I begin I like if you've

got a one-dimensional universe that's just a line and so it takes one number or one point to describe one measurement or something to describe you know where it is on this line so the line is of infinite length you just pick an arbitrary zero somewhere you know like a number line and then you know just give a number in it that will account for any point on that one-dimensional universe

two Dimensions is a plane because in order to pinpoint any point on that plane you got to use two coordinates now this is like Cartesian coordinates here so you make an x y axis and then you give two numbers

and then you can you can describe any
point or you can locate any point on
that two-dimensional Continuum with
three dimensions it takes three points
and X Y and Z axes
in like a Cartesian coordinate system
and then you can pinpoint any any point
in that Continuum by using three numbers
and that's three dimensional so when you
get into four-dimensional space time
like

Einstein was talking about
it takes four numbers or four four
measurements
to locate anything exactly because time
is there too so you got the x coordinate
or the x-axis y-axis

um

z-axis and then you've got like the time axis the t-axis and so that will locate any point in space and time by using four numbers and that's why it's called four dimensional

so

so I'm not sure that Einstein really was saying that there's just one dimension I mean you can see that there's a Continuum like even before Einstein came along space was a Continuum and it's not like these three dimensions were like set in stone I mean obviously one dimension in space is forwards and backwards you know one side to side

one's up and down

but you've got the forwards and

backwards all you got to do is turn 90

degrees and now your forwards and

backwards is different now it's what

used to be the side to side

and apparently time is like that too or

at least can be or should be According

to some

uh some of the more

philosophical

physicists I suppose

so I mean with regard to pinpointing

Something in space-time

yeah you're gonna need four dimensions

in order to pinpoint anything in that

Universe in that Cosmos and so the

string theorists might be saying you know there's 20 28 or something you'd have to give 28 coordinates to exactly pinpoint something but they've got this weird concept of Dimensions I think that they're like collapsed like microscopic Dimensions that somehow fit the mathematics

so let's see here

with regard to you can only move in One Direction yeah through well through time you can

um at least we seem to be stuck moving forwards Through Time although I can I can move backwards like this but I mean if you call it a Continuum then I guess

yeah I don't know I I really

um not in a position to argue that part

of this but with regard to four

dimensions that just means you've got

four Cartesian coordinates that have to

be accounted for when locating anything

in that space

so

yeah I just wanted to address that part

so let's see here and I really don't

think Einstein was anywhere near to

coming up with the same idea as go to My

Buddha Einstein was looking outwards go

to My Buddha was primarily looking

inwards

and I think the Buddha was a Mystic and

I do not think Einstein was a Mystic

so Einstein was trying to describe the
empirical universe

and the Buddha I mean you could call it
an empirical universe but it was

entirely inwards it was like a

psychological University he was he was
trying to uh

trying to take into account

but uh let's just get to the actual
question here

um are you or to what extent familiar

with the work of Carlos Castaneda and I

read like his first four books when I
was like

18 years old

and um I mean I don't remember them

extremely vividly now but I do remember that they were getting more and more far out and it's sort of like the Seth books also the the more books you read the more far out it gets it's like he has to keep reaching for more more and more weirdness just to keep people interested because you just get used to the standard weirdness so you need more weirdness

um

and I think that Carlos Castaneda was uh really he was some it was like a professor at The Evergreen State College in Washington state and it's um a lot of what he wrote was essentially fiction although I assume it

was based on real anthropology and
probably some of his own drug trips
but um

I'm not sure if Don Juan actually
existed

but uh yeah I have read like the first
at least three probably the first four
books but it was when I was a teenager
with like long brown curly hair unlike
unlike today

so I think I'll just move on to uh Titus
theosynthesis next question

let's see meanwhile on another note back
in 1984 Mick Karn the bassist from the
band Japan and Peter Murphy the lead
singer from the band Bauhaus got

together in Dallas car a music
collaboration that produced The Walking
hour LP a unique music musical Endeavor
that had no commercial success but has
since acquired a cult following among
many musical connoisseurs especially
musicians well the album in its hole is
a highly recommended listen one track in
particular comes to mind as it's about
that mind and the book it's about the
mind and the Buddha

I would like to hear your thoughts on
the lyrics so here they are the the the
piece is called his box

by Dallas Carr

and the lyrics are

on his hand does he make a point he

needs some point of reference he is very
cold indeed nothing ever happens in his
box Buddha speaks quietly in the night
can you see what you know Buddha says
there is no wrong or right you just reap
what you sow still not able to see the
sun desperately looks for the door
blinded by the fool inside everything is
happening in his box Buddha is giggling
out of sight there is no such thing as
shame with a light blow the box is gone
he's with himself again
and I think that's it so he's then uh
Titus the ascentis is can't say that I
know many or any pop songs that mention
Buddha himself perhaps I could encourage

you to give this song A listen it is
available here on YouTube you can't miss
it the album cover is vibrant green blue
lemon yellowish be warned though there's
keyboards on it but it's not rock and
roll so I guess you find it okay
the other highly recommended track from
the album to listen to would be the
judgment is the mirror also available on
YouTube much regards T so he wants my uh
let's see my opinion if you'd like to
hear my thoughts on these lyrics
and for starters
I would say that I mean for a long time
I have considered that
women artists and French people should
stay away from philosophy because as a

general rule they never make a very good
showing of it and artists my experience
with artists trying to understand dhamma
um

yeah I mean maybe it's just because I'm
more of a more mind-oriented than heart
oriented you know I'm more philosophical
and religious you know more the
scientific temperament than the artistic
temperament and so

um I'd maybe I just can't fully
appreciate an artistic approach to dama
other than some some Buddhist art I like
but um

let's see yeah I mean on his hand I mean
it seems to be the point that I mean

being in a box is sort of like your
mental prison and the Buddha has like
evaporated his box which I mean that's
that's fine

um let's see here maybe I should just go
over the lyrics here on his hand does he
make a point

he needs some point of reference he's
very cold indeed nothing ever happens in
his box I mean that part I don't I don't
uh fully

I can't really grock the the dhamma in
that

um if he's saying that the Buddha and
nothing ever happens in the Buddha's box
I wouldn't tend to agree with that
Buddha speaks quietly in the night can

you see what you know Buddha says there
is no wrong or right you just re put you
so

um

yeah I mean you can say there is no
wrong or right in Buddhism it's more
skillful or unskillful although there's
a lot of mention of wrong and right in
Buddhism I mean the noble Eightfold Path
you know right you view right man I'm
embarrassing myself now to your right
view right thought you know right speech
right action right livelihood you know
so right right right right and then
there's wrong mitcha mitcha DT wrong
view so there is mention of wrong and

right to see

still not able to see the sun

desperately looks for the door blinded

by the fool inside yeah I mean that's

like metaphors for being unenlightened

you know being stuck in samsara the

unenlightened version of samsara

let's see everything is happening in

this box you know I assume he's

referring to the mental prison

Buddha is giggling out of sight and I

think the Buddha I mean according to

tradition the Buddha did not giggle

um there's no such thing as shame

yeah he's with himself again that's kind

of a self-view thing at the end

um yeah again it's I really cannot fully

appreciate artistic attempts at
describing dhamma I'm artists are better
at like images you know some some Buddha
images

or like even paintings are are really
can be really profound but when an
artist is trying to explain
dhamma in words they tend to fall flat
along with French people and and
well a lot of women

so

um

yeah

so I'll just move on to next question
now that I've offended no if any women
actually watch this this video a few do

but uh it was like a month ago I was looking at my analytics on my YouTube channel it was saying that 100 of my viewers are male which I know can't be true because I know there are a few females but maybe they just don't they just prefer not to specify their gender to YouTube or something but everyone that does specify their gender um like at least a month ago who was watching my videos it was male so maybe I didn't offend anybody but I'm not trying to offend anyone I'm just calling them as I see them so we'll just move on to the next question here this is from the Arya sawasti project

and the Arya swasti project says
greetings Ponyo before becoming a terror
bottom monk did you consider other
teachings or paths and if so what were
they
what was the differences that made you
to settle on particularly terrible
Buddhism okay so that's like two
questions
so did I consider other teachings or
paths uh yeah I mean before I started
liking terrovata I liked Zen especially
Soto Zen so my original idea of
renouncing the world and becoming a
Buddhist monk was to become a Soto Zen
Monk

um

but I then started visiting monasteries
kind of checking out places to see if
there would be good places for me to
ordain and uh the terrible place that I
went to seemed much preferable to the
Zen place that I went to

um

so let's see

there was another possibility that I had
was just making like a wool robe and
getting myself a bowl and just hitting
the road and just follow my own thoughts
falling follow my own idea you know just
be non-denominational
or or something but I knew myself well
enough to know that having an

established system with rules in place
and maybe like you know Elders who could
supervise me and teach me stuff would be
much more conducive to me making
progress in Dharma than me just hitting
the road and becoming on wandering
homeless aesthetic

also for a short time I had this weird
idea of like being ordained as a
carthusian monk you know in Roman
Catholicism who they take I mean they're
like the strictest of the the uh orders
of Catholic monks and they take vows of
silence and I have this weird idea that
if I took a vow of silence then nobody
would you know I wouldn't have to tell

anyone that wasn't actually a Christian
but I guess at the very least you'd have
to make confession you know you know
forgive me Father I'm not really a
Christian I don't think that would go
very well yeah it was just a dumb idea
and I dismissed it pretty well but it I
did consider it occasionally just
because you know be easier to find uh a
workable Christian Monastery especially
in the west than uh a workable Buddhist
one especially at the time there's there
are more options now but there are
relatively few options at the time that
I became a monk
so what what was it that caused me to
settle on particularly terravada

Buddhism there there were two one is I
read the suttony Pata
um first by reading Zen flashes Zen
bones compiled by Paul wraps that kind
of converted me to Zen at first when I
was like maybe 18 or 19 years old but
then I read the sutiny Pata maybe a year
or two later and I was really impressed
by the sutiny Potter because it was
describing the way teravada Buddhist
monks or just early Buddhist monks lived
in India as wandering ascetics you know
they weren't
in this formalized setting with all
these rules in place you know just all
the Bowing and the the chanting and

everything that that is

um you know happens a lot in Zen

monasteries to something that happens in

terrible monasteries too but it's not

necessary in taravada because these

wandering Aesthetics didn't do that

stuff you know they're sleeping under

trees they're just these tough Macho

Aesthetics and that appealed to me at

the time my father was Macho you know I

kind of I wasn't nearly as Macho as him

but you know there's this appreciation

for like a manly path

um I remember reading in uh the uh the

varieties of religious experience by

oh man William James it's like I'm

forgetting names a lot by William James

who are you saying that uh
you know usually like aggressiveness is
how men fulfill their masculinity you
know they become soldiers or athletes
you know they or just go out and get in
fights a lot or something but another
way for a man a more spiritual way for a
man to fulfill his masculine urges
is through asceticism just by being
tough and that appealed to me at the
time I really wasn't much of a jock
and I didn't want to kill people didn't
want to go out and get in bar brawls
so just uh toughing it out in the woods
appeal to me and so there was that and
then as I already said I went to a Zen

place and a terravala Buddhist Place
both in California when I was looking
around

and the Zen place I mean it was monks
and nuns living in the same compound
and they're putting on Layman's clothing
and driving to the store to buy
groceries and so forth and lots and lots
of bowing and chanting and then I went
to the Terra Water Place
it was like three monks there just
living in silence pretty much
and it seemed fairly obvious within a
short time
that the terravonna place was coming
closer to what the Buddha originally
taught than the Zen place

so that pretty much sold me on tarawada
and I was ordained at that same
Monastery in California

um so I think I'll just move on to the
Aria swasti project the next question
here

he says I've read all three of your
books and enjoyed them very much that's
good I like that do you have a favorite
or a favorite part of any of the books
um

I think overall I mean there's good
stuff I've written in all of them you
know I've got favorites in in all three
volumes and if I put out another volume
there'd be favorites in that too

um I think the first one that I wrote
essays in terravala Buddhism

um I might have the most gratification
from this one just because

um of some some of the things that I've
written are useful information for monks
that were very difficult for me to find
and so it's sort of like a service to
other monks you know like the the
ancient Indian star calendar I mean I I
looked everywhere trying to find
information on the ancient Indian
calendar that was prevalent in the
Buddhist time in the the Ganges Valley
in India 2 500 years ago and it it took
some doing to actually I mean I was
going to monks that had written books on

you know Indian

astronomy and astrology and so forth and

they're just pretty much all of them

going with medieval Hindu astrology and

astronomy and trying to find

what they were following in the Buddhist

time I mean that was very difficult I

finally managed to find one book at a

used bookstore in Rangoon that had

um it was called the Surya sedanta and

it was an old translation from the 1800s

by a Christian Missionary named Ebenezer

Burgess and some unknown editors had

added footnotes to his translation of

the Surya sedanta which was uh it was a

Sanskrit it was a long Sanskrit poem

this of like essentially describing
um Western astronomy and Western
astronomy at the time was Roman like
Greco-Roman ptolemaic astronomy was the
earth in the center of the universe and
and like cycles and epic cycles and all
this and it was very difficult to follow
which wasn't really necessary to follow
so I I kind of read it but you know it's
trying to
make sense

of like Poetic descriptions of doing
signs and cosines for calculating like
conjunctions and so forth I mean it was
just and and you're not even using real
astronomy anymore it's it's like
outdated like

geocentric astronomy astronomy trying to
say astrology and astronomy at the same
time it just wasn't worth it but in some
of the footnotes it was describing the
oldest known like the the lunar Mansions
the 27

asterisms the nakshatra that uh was what
was the

um the Buddhist ancient Buddhist ancient
Indian North Indian calendar was based
on and uh there were still a few little
things that I couldn't couldn't work out
um like exactly how they divided it up
into 12 months because there are 27
constellations and it's like the the
month in according to the the Indian

calendar the ancient Indian calendar
probably the modern Indian calendar also
the month that you're in is dependent on
the position of the full moon among the
constellations so if the full moon
appears in the constellation of say
let's see rewa D which is a more or less
Pisces than this the month rayuda or
rayudi

so

I mean how how it was just and certain
things I didn't have worked out but that
was I I wrote

um my best description of the ancient
Indian star calendar and it explains
some things like why the the rainy
season officially starts like five weeks

after the rainy season really starts you know it's like the Buddhist calendar is getting out of sync with the seasons because it's based on the site of real year and not the seasonal year and there's this thing called precession of the equinoxes that is causing it's like one day every 70 years for the seasons and the stars to get out of sync so that kind of thing um but I've written a lot of essays that I particularly felt some satisfaction for having written some of them are better written than others I suppose so I do have some

favorites but uh

in I don't know you can pick your own

favorites I guess

so I'll just move on to the Aria swasti

project next question here

can you comment on what you see as the

biggest misconceptions about Buddhism

well I mean I think most Buddhists don't

really understand Kama or Karma I think

most Buddhists don't really understand

nibana or Nirvana which makes sense

because nibana or Nirvana is completely

off the scale and you cannot grasp

intellectually anyway I mean there's

certain makeshifts you can say it's the

end of suffering or something but

that's like in an ethical sense but like

in the metaphysical sense what is
nirvana you know aside from like
ultimate truth or something is I mean
you can just kind of stick labels onto
it but you can't really grasp it you
cannot grasp a reality with the
intellectual mind

another thing that uh is one of the
biggest misconceptions about Buddhism is
pedicia Samuel Potter or dependent
colonizing

um as I've described many times uh it
was so difficult for anybody to
understand it the Buddha himself
according to the legend almost became a
Hermit and didn't say anything because

he figured nobody was going to
understand it anyway
and within a short time within the first
one or two hundred years of the
existence of Buddhism it had essentially
condensed or crystallized down to the 12
knee Donna Theory the 12 links you know
this causes that which causes that it's
like a linear sequence
and I really don't think that's what the
Buddha taught
so

the biggest misconceptions about
Buddhism another misconception about
Buddhism is just the assumption that the
polytexts as they exist today
accurately represent what the Buddha

taught

that um I think that is a serious misconception and dogmatists or faith oriented people they just cannot question their religion they want to believe it's all gospel truth literally and so you know they don't want to hear it you know it's just they'll come up with these arguments I've had intelligent Western monks who are just very dogmatic and Faith oriented they're saying you know the Buddha was enlightened and so he knew how to teach in a way that the teachings wouldn't get corrupted but human nature is human nature you

know you can you've got this pure system
and then you you start putting it into
the hands of impure people you know the
same happened with Christianity and it's
going to start veering in weird
directions and get corrupted and
everything is impermanent including
budavachana or the Buddha taught
so yeah those are some of them I could
probably come up with a longer list but
so that's so I mean even just the middle
path is is a big misconception because
most people think oh middle path the
middle path between self-indulgence and
self-torture but I mean if you read the
sutras there are a number of middle paths
like dependent co-arising is like the

middle path and that may have been the
original middle path of the Buddha
taught not just the middle path between
self-indulgence and self-torture but the
middle path between is and isn't
and it's it's like is the is the world
real or is it unreal well

no

it's the middle path between those
but uh

I think I'll just move on to the next
question maybe I should just start
answering answering these questions with
with koans or riddles or something just
keep everybody completely confused
so the next question is from hey it's

Tig

and hey it's TIG says what is your

opinion on horse flies

have you been bit harassed and molested

[_] by a horse fly before and I think

he just likes being kind of irreverent

and off the wall

um somehow horse flies I'm pretty sure

they came up like biting flies or

something came up in the Discord server

and so he went to the Q a room on the

Discord server and and asked me my

opinion of horse flies and I mean nobody

likes horse flies

um they just don't I mean if you've ever

seen a horse fly like when it's biting

you or when it's starting to bite you

you know it's got like these these two little things on its mouth that kind of open up and then this this blade comes down and like Cuts your skin and unlike a mosquito or a flea that sucks your blood the horse fly just slices you and then like licks it up and it hurts

and uh yeah I had considerable experiences with horse flies partly because they're attracted to moisture like

um those of you who've gone swimming in rivers may may know like during the summer time especially if it's like a farm area where there's lots of horses

and cows around where a horse flies you know congregate that you come up out of the water they're more likely to bite you because they're attracted to the wetness and when I was in Burma I was wet all the time because I was just sweating like the proverbial Arab and so yeah horse flies were a problem but they weren't nearly as bad as I think they're called sand flies I call them these vampire flies because there's way more of them and they were a little bigger than a housefly but longer and kind of a modeled gray color and they hurt as approximately as bad as a horse fly did but and they I mean they were in swarms

they weren't like horse flies are
generally like alone wolves you know
they're just like solitary agents
um but but these these sand flies or
vampire flies or whatever they were
um I mean sometimes they'd be in in like
swarms and I'd be living under a rock
ledge out in this forest with no
mosquito net no building you know I was
just it was like open season on me and
I'd be sitting there sometimes I mean my
eyebrows would be all the way up and my
eyes would be wide and I'd be holding my
sweat rag just just kind of exclaiming
to myself because it was kind of it was
kind of scary and

I mean I can be bitten by a mosquito
with Equanimity you know I can just sit
there and let them and so long as it's
not like crazy and lots of them
you know I mean if I'm there there were
Times living under that Rock Ledge in
Burma where I'd have like five or six
mosquitoes biting me all the same time
and of course a monk isn't supposed to
swat them not supposed to kill any
living thing not even the self-defense
not on purpose anyway but these vampire
flies I mean it hurt when they would
bite and I just could not sit there with
Equanimity and so ironically it was when
I was trying to be as strict of a monk
as I could you know just living just out

in the wilderness no building nothing
that you know no mosquito net that I
started like swatting these things with
like a wet sweat rag you know I had like
this washcloth that would be sort of
damp and heavy and lethal
um just because it was so soaked in
sweat all the time and I got really good
at it I got like like phenomenally good
it's like you learn like if the the fly
is right here you Swan it from the from
the back so that it whips around your
arm and speeds up it's sort of like the
cracking of a whip
and uh at first I mean they're tough so
at first

um you know they wouldn't die but I just got too good at it with all the practice of just trying to keep them off of me and a monk is allowed to use a kind of whisk thing to keep flies off of them I mean he's not supposed to be trying to kill them but that they're like the Terminator they don't give up if you don't kill them they just come back and try and bite you again but I did try I mean I've mentioned this before that I did try to uh at least

um

mitigate the Bad Karma from killing these

painfully biting blood drinking

parasites by after I killed one or at

least stunned it I'd drop it into an ant
lion pit and thereby feed a poor hungry
little ant lion

and ant lions are kind of cool I mean
those of you who don't don't live in
like a dry Dusty Sandy place and maybe
you've never seen ant lions before but
they dig a funnel

the in the sand or in the dust it's just
this funnel and then any animal that
falls into it the ant lions at the very
bottom in the the nadir not the Apex the
nadir of of the funnel and it starts
using its tail to like flip sand onto it
to knock it farther down and then when
it gets to the bottom it's got these big

jaws and just eats it and that's like
the larva or the nymph and when it
reaches maturity it turns into this
little thing that looks like a little
dragonfly or something
so anyway I'm just uh Meandering all
over the place here
in uh in the realm of Entomology
so I hate stick says my opinion of horse
flies uh yeah I don't like them I mean
the entire insect order diptera I
don't like much you know which includes
flies mosquitoes gnats
you know it's just
they're bad I mean that's a good
indication that that whoever created
this universe is not a good God

you know he's he's got like a like a
Mean Streak to him I mean you consider
that most of the living creatures in
this world are parasites because almost
every creature has got littler creatures
sucking on it or living in his guts or
or whatever

it's it's just it's ugly nature is ugly
people who think that nature is is just
beautiful and harmonious that the birds
are seeing with joy and all this it's
it's not that way at all it's like it's
a it's a battlefield everything's trying
to kill and eat something else and the
birds when they're singing they're
they're deadly serious when they're

singing it may sound nice they're deadly
serious they're like little dinosaurs I
mean they technically are little
dinosaurs

so

so yeah I've been uh bit harassed and um
well I said not

really [__] by a horse fly

but um

yeah and then there was another thing
called a pony fly there was like a
miniature horse fly it was obviously the
same build it's like a compact horsefly
and fortunately they're moved into my
into my the little cave of the the under
overhanging Rock Ledge there were a lot
of wasps in there and there was a kind

of digger wasp that specialized in these small horse flies it was really pretty it was like yellow and black stripes all over it was really nice and it just it packed like 50 at least of these little horse flies into this hole in the ground while I was watching you know they sting it and paralyze it and then poke it into the hole where the babies are and feed them

so

but uh my my studies of Entomology especially wasps the order hymenoptera in in Burma is uh it's good for a different uh a different show I guess so we'll just

move on to uh the next question this is
from Stevie

and Stevie

says what is taravada's account

regarding the interplay between personal
agency and the results or fruits or

fruition of karma hoping for more than

karma is one of the imponderables

say a person was murdered is it always

the case that the victim had some dark

or Bad Karma and their death is the

fruit of that Karma or could the victim

be karmically innocent well no the

victim can't be karmically innocent

because anything that happens to you is

necessarily the fruition of karma

but I don't think it's necessary I mean

I could be indulging in heresy here but I don't think it's necessary that you're going to have like this mechanistic one for one eye for an eye kind of karma thing going on because karma it's not so much good karma and Bad Karma it's skillful Karma and unskillful Karma so if you're unskillful at driving a car you're gonna make stupid mistakes and have accidents and bad things happen to you and if you're not skillful at driving your karma it's the same kind of a thing you're just not skillful and so you're crashing into things and making all kinds of suffering so it can work that

way also and everybody most people are
pretty crappy at driving their karma
so let's see here

um he asked this question it wasn't in
the Q a room you know on the Discord
server but it was in the strictly
terravada room and So my answer to that
question was what you do is karma what
happens to you is the fruition of karma
so then he answered right

so the victims of all murders are
murdered because the victim did dark or
Bad Karma

in a previous life right and then a
little later on he says natural
disasters and other events with groups
of people is a thorny issue regarding

Karma no doubt I like

how you emphasize the importance of individual Karma and that's what I'm struggling with how can one person's wepaka or the fruition find expression in another person's action or Karma and as it turns out

um on my blog that's up

um it's sort of languishing I haven't added anything to it in over a month but I do have a while a ways back uh you could probably search it on article or an essay entitled reconciling Karma with materialism fitting it all together and in that essay I include

um

a quote from Arthur schopenhauer

and Arthur schopenhauer also kind of
believed in in a kind of karma that's
why he endorsed Buddhism because it
agreed with his philosophy and uh so
this this quote from Arthur schopenhauer
kind of addresses the same this same
situation which is as follows all the
events in a man's life would accordingly
stand in two fundamentally different
kinds of connection

firstly in the objective causal
connection of the natural process
secondly in a subjective connection
which exists only in relation to the
individual who experiences it and which
is thus as subjective as his own dreams

that both kinds of connection exist
simultaneously and the self-same event
although a link in two totally different
chains nevertheless falls into place in
both so that the fate of one individual
invariably fits the fate of the other
and each is the hero of his own drama
while simultaneously figuring in a drama
foreign to him this is something that
surpasses our powers of comprehension
and can only be conceived as possible by
virtue of the most wonderful
pre-established Harmony
although
there is another way of explaining it
and that is that anything that possibly

can exist does exist and so

um

when we get for us let's say somebody
does something bad to us then he's
making new Karma and we're just paying
an old karmic debt so to speak or we're
just not skillful I mean we've got bad
habits with regard to driving our Karma
So You Know It just fits together

um

you can say that that can happen simply
because in an infinite Universe anything
that can happen does happen and we're
just in this universe where it's
happening
which isn't a very good explanation but
even schopenhauer couldn't really

explain it it's it's like

um there's a suit as it says you know

trying to figure out exactly how Karma

Works can make you go insane

it just breaks your think box

so yeah I mean it is

I mean we are a character in somebody

else's Dream well at the same time their

character in our dream and

I mean one of the main arguments against

Karma

which was brought up by my sweetheart

that uh

um

Stevie here is uh sort of responding to

at one point

he's like a natural disaster you know
it's like a thousand people dying an
earthquake how could they all have
exactly the same Karma but I mean the
Buddhist explanation to that is you know
we've got so much Karma accumulated
lifetime after lifetime after lifetime
that almost everybody has some latent
earthquake karma in there somewhere
so I mean that's that's it too I mean
you don't just have it's not like this
mechanistic this has to happen it's not
deterministic
it's just that you're open to the
possibility of it due to some weakness
in your own ability to navigate samsara
skillfully

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

basketball Jesus

and basketball Jesus says please do tell what are Katina Privileges and this is a response I'm pretty sure to the previous q a where I was discussing Katina privileges

but with regard to

um monks can only keep three robes you know the up the lower robe the upper robe the outer robe it's just three rectangles of cloth is what a monk is supposed to to keep and be satisfied with if he gets an extra robe in addition to those three he's got to get

rid of one of them within 10 days so he can keep an extra Row for 10 days unless he has Katina privileges and then while he has Katina privileges he can keep as many robes as he wants

and so basketball Jesus here is wanting to know what these Katina privileges are and so what happens is at the end of The reigns retreat

there's like the monsoon season in in tropical Asia and it lasts about four months and generally according to tradition most monks take the first three months of the rainy season as it's called Uh Wausau it just means it rains rain Wausau means rain so they stay in one place they're not allowed to wander

around during the three months of the of
the Wasa

and at the and it's originally was
because monks were wandering around
during the rainy season and like
stepping on all kinds of little insects
that come out when it rains and like
trampling Farmers crops but because the
crops are growing during the rainy
season and so

um it was also just the tradition for
other non-buddhist ascetics to stay in
one place during the rainy season and so
just through Indian tradition
um monks are not allowed to travel
during the rainy season which

unfortunately is is like the middle of
summer in in Western in the western
temperate zone

but um at the end of The Rains Retreat
there is the Katina ceremony
and it began as a test

it's like within 24 hours before dawn of
the following day the monks have to
receive cloth they've got to measure it
they've got to cut it into pieces
they've got to sew it together into a
regulation robe and then they have to
dye it so it's the right color all
before and Dawn of the next day and
that's difficult I've made one robe
myself I sewed it by hand of course in
in ancient times they didn't have sewing

machines just sewing it with a needle
and thread it took about three weeks of
just daily like six hours a day working
on this thing so and I didn't even have
to diet it was already it was already a
good enough color

um but the monks at the end of this
range Retreat after living together in
the same place

they've got to make this robe within
within one day and it's a kind of test
it's the way I see it it was like if
they were harmonious enough you know
they were like

um what's the word

uh Cooperative Cooperative enough with

each other you know and harmonious then
they can perform this difficult task
then they get this reward of being able
to keep extra cloth and and so forth
during

um the next I think it's three months
which is the three months after the
rainy season throughout the cold season
mostly

foreign

and it has degenerated into a
meaningless ceremony in Burma where uh
on Katina day somebody will just donate
a fully made set of factory-made robes
to the monks the monks accept it and
then they think they've done Katina and
they they earn these Katina Privileges

and I just refused to go along with it I just would not participate in a Katina ceremony if I could possibly avoid it when I became the abbot of my own Monastery in central Burma I just forbade Katina privileges or just forbade Katina ceremonies because it was so corrupt it was meaningless because it really was a test if you can perform this difficult task within one day all the monks who live there even though even the Buddha participated according to the text he was the one who threaded the needle he would sit there and thread the needle for the other monks um I guess in Thailand some of the

stricter monasteries will actually make a robe but still they're kind of cheating because they're using a sewing machine and it says in the in the vinya that if you have enough robe to make a you have you know cloth you make a double robe a double thickness robe which is more than twice as difficult then you have to make one of those and I'm pretty sure the time monks even though they're trying to be strict bless their hearts you know they're just making the easiest kind of robe with a sewing machine which is still it's kind of cheating in my opinion so that's that's what the container privileges are and Katina literally

means a frame because when they're making the Rope sewing the pieces together used a kind of frame to keep it all kind of flat and rectangular when you were sewing it

so I'll just move on to the next question here this is from the anti-marxist league

and the anti-marxist league

um really he asks remarkably anti-marxist question here

is the bodhisattva vow really binding

If someone becomes a Buddhist through Mahayana and takes the bodhisattva vows but then becomes terrovaden is that person still somehow bound to the

bodhisattva vowel that's a good question

I've considered that myself

um if you took it in a previous life I

don't think it's binding because it

wasn't really you who took it I mean if

you want to use that kind of argument

though

um you know it's not really you from one

moment to the next

but I mean if you don't even remember

making the vowel I mean how can you be

bound to it if it wasn't you it was

somebody else that caused you to exist

after that person died

but let's say you take the the body side

of about in this life you know you start

off as this idealistic teenage Mahayana

Buddhist and then as you get a little older you know you're in your 30s or 40s you convert to Theravada because you consider Theravada water to come closer to what the Buddha actually taught

then yeah I mean you might you might have to break the promise I mean it would be essentially breaking a promise which according to monastic discipline is a dukkata offense it's a minor offense a dukkata offense or an offensive wrongdoing is like the most minor category of offense you just make confession and it's it's uh absolved

but still you're making a little bit of karma by

making a vow to do something but I mean sometimes you're better off breaking a vow let's say you vow Revenge it's like somebody messes you up you know they do something bad to you and you just vow to just mess them up so that they curse their mother for the day she gave them birth and then after you calm down you realize it's better for me not to mess that person up you know just forgive them avoid them in the future good enough

and so I mean you'd be breaking a vow then but you're better off breaking the vow then and I think in this case if

you become a terrible on a Buddhist and
the Buddhist says become enlightened In
This Very life if you possibly can
then you're probably better off breaking
the buddhisattva bowl because the
body's out of a bow has you pretty much
stuck in some sorrow forever and ever
because the body's talking about say
that you know no matter how many you
know even though all the suffering
beings in the world are infinitely many
you know I vow to save them all this
kind of stuff now I vow to just stay in
samsara unenlightened until all other
beings are are enlightened
he's just gonna be in in some sorrow

forever which is essentially the
opposite of what the Buddha was teaching
um also I mean on the other hand kind of
maybe the other finger or something
uh you read like in The Diamond Cutter
Sutra how a bodhisattva is supposed to
be and it comes pretty close to the way
an arahaunt is supposed to be

so

yeah

I think

you know it's not good to break vowels
but it's by the same token it's not good
to make vows that are not very carefully
you know thought out and you know you
just

you got to be real sure that it's the

right thing to vow to begin with and
that includes like marriage vows
so many people in the west you know they
vow you know in a house of God
supposedly that they're going to stay
together through better for worse until
death do they part and then two years
down the road they get a divorce because
you know they don't agree on finances or
something
so that's not good so I mean it is good
to keep your word but sometimes you may
be better off
breaking about if the vowel was not a
good vow to make to begin with
so

you're bound to a vow if you made it but
I mean if you break that vow especially
if if it wasn't uh particularly wise or
vowed to make

then uh you know it's sometimes it's

I remember one time somebody's saying
that it's hard to know what is the right
thing to do

and I remember remarking I mean

sometimes there is no right thing to do
you just have to choose between two
wrong things

and that's I mean living in this world I
mean you don't always get to make the
right choice because sometimes you just
got to choose between wrong choices so
you just choose the wrong choice that

isn't as wrong as the other ones
and that's that's the way it is here I
think with breaking the bodies up about
so I think I'll just move on to the next
question here this is from Creole I
think I don't know how to pronounce
k-r-i-e-l Creel
Creel

let's go with Creole Creole says here is
a question that I had for a while would
an enlightened person feel embarrassment
or awkwardness for example would a fully
liberated being blush even slightly if
its pants fell down in front of a crowd
of people perhaps revealing even
intimate body parts if not I wonder if

this could be thought of as a test to
validate or not real Enlightenment what
are your thoughts thank you

well you're welcome even though I
haven't answered the question yet

um according to orthodox terravonna

a Buddha or a fully enlightened being
would not feel embarrassment

embarrassment

um or like shame it would be it would be
a kind of cuckoo it'd be like anxiety or
guilt

um and that is an unwholesome mental
state and no enlightened being would
indulge in feeling that sort of thing I
mean at the very at the very most there
might be like a momentary flash of it

that would just come and go you know it
just

run its course and it would not be
prolonged more than one moment

just through the past just through force
of karma from the past but he wouldn't
cling to it and like you know follow
through with it or anything

so I mean from the Orthodox here about a
point of view the answer is no a fully
enlightened being would not feel

embarrassment or awkwardness I mean some
kind of awkwardness if you know it's
like your leg fell asleep you know
physical awkwardness

you get up from meditating and one of

your legs is asleep and you're kind of
Staggering around a little bit can't
walk very good and that kind of
awkwardness sure but
um like emotional
self-consciousness kind of a thing no I
don't think so but from my own personal
point of view just setting aside
Orthodox teravada you know the the
official party line from my own
opinion

um

I don't think it would be impossible for
an enlightened being assuming that
enlightened beings even exist in a
samsara context in this world
but

um

yeah I mean they might get nervous like
I remember seeing some a friend of mine
a long time ago was into uh ajish Shanti
who is a person who can claims to be
enlightened or is considered to be
enlightened and I watched some of his
videos and he was obviously nervous at
the beginning of the videos and he would
say uh I can't remember what what he
kept saying over and over again but some
people probably me included they'll just
unconsciously just throw in like you
know you know or um or things like that
and he was doing that and plus he seemed
nervous at the beginning he finally kind

of calmed down and got into the flow of
it and I'm thinking what an enlightened
being be that way I mean he's claiming
to be enlightened he's considered to be
enlightened by lots and lots of people
but I'm not so sure and then neem
corolli Baba whose picture is up there I
mean he could be he could have been
fully enlightened and he would yell and
cry and laugh and do all sorts of things
so

I don't think it's necessarily A like
I think that a fully enlightened being
this is my own opinion here not Orthodox
terrible I already told you what
Orthodox caravada says but my own
opinion is a fully enlightened being can

do whatever whatever just seems

appropriate you know whatever feels

right or whatever is right

um

and

they're just not identified with it you

know it's like their their body is just

nature taking its course you know even

their brain you know what their a lot of

you know what they're doing is just

nature taking its course and they're

just not identified with that

so it could be that way too and I

wouldn't be surprised if it is assuming

again that enlightened beings even exist

in this worldly context

but I think I might get to that a little later this there's another question if I remember correctly a little farther down so

yeah I mean even if they did feel that embarrassment they wouldn't be identified with that feeling it would just be just a natural thing that arises and they're just not identified with the The Walking meat puppet anyway so I'll just move on to the next question here this is an easy one this is from macubo

and makubo says are you familiar with the works of Hubert benowit I don't know how to pronounce French names Benoit let's call him Benoit are you familiar

with the works of Hubert benowit in particular the Supreme Doctrine and if so what are your thoughts well with regard to the question I'm familiar with the works of Herbert Benoit the very easy answer is nope

I don't recall ever hearing of this person before

and uh I'm completely unfamiliar with the Supreme doctrine of her Hubert Benoit and so I guess those are my thoughts sorry about that let's move on to the next question this is from Yuga and Yugo says can Karma be dangerous if not understood right in one of the sutas Buddha explains how and why people are

born rich or poor or sick or healthy if
oh if you take a rich person that knows
why he is rich in this life he could use
that logic to be more selfish and so on
if you know what suta I'm talking about
there are a number of sutos that talk
about that sort of thing like there's
one suit it's a relatively well-known
one that says such things as you know if
a person is born ugly it means that they
were like an angry person in a previous
life I'm really not sure that again it's
not that deterministic and mechanistic
that karma really doesn't necessarily
work that way in all cases
but um

yeah if you take a rich person and he

knows why he is rich in this life he
could use that logic to be more selfish
I don't think that's how it works I mean
according to Orthodox Buddhism a rich
person in this life was generous in a
previous life or just has like it still
has a certain amount of generosity
probably nowadays you look at rich
people it was a previous life
I mean some people they're still
um very generous benefactors even though
they're rich but it's a general rule you
get rich because you're looking out for
number one or maybe you just luck out
and invent something that people find
useful like Facebook or something

um but uh yeah I mean according to Buddhism as a general if you're going to be rich in a future life it's because you should be generous in this life but on the other hand uh Karma can be dangerous if not understood correctly like let's say you've got some Buddhist terrorist who thinks he's going to go to heaven for starting a civil war or something then yeah he doesn't understand Karma correctly because you're not going to get good karma for that you're going to get bad karma for that you know you're going to make bad things happen and eventually bad things are gonna be happening back to you

in fact even when you're doing the bad things bad things are already happening back to you and the fact that you're poisoning your own mind and your own karmic stream with this toxicity which is pretty much how Buddhist ethics works I mean it's not like you're going to get punished you know 10 lifetimes down the road for killing somebody it's like you're you're damaging yourself you know while you've got this intention to kill them and while you're following through with it already you're poisoning your own system

you don't believe that just read Crime and Punishment by Dostoevsky

so let's see

yeah Karma can be dangerous if not

understood correctly

um and uh I mean for some reason it just

reminds me of Burmese Buddhists who

really are spiritual materialists and I

mean not all of them but it they tend to

be spiritual materialists in which they

think of karma as just a kind of money

you know they're they're investing in

their future by donating to monasteries

and so forth you know they see it as as

almost like a a financial transaction

like an investment in their future

and uh I mean that in a way is is also

it's not understanding Karma correctly

in my opinion

you know this

I don't know it just doesn't sit right
with me

and like a lot of you go to a Buddhist
monastery you'll have a Burmese one

especially you know you'll see these

like a chair there and it'll have like

this name plaque you know donated by the
the so-and-so family and

yeah it's like they're trying to get
their their payback in this life

rather than uh you know they're just
really going for doing the the right

thing I mean that's that's how you're

going to get the best karma is not

you're making some transaction you know

if I donate this I get this back you
know in in the next life or something I
mean that's just that's just a
transaction

and it won't necessarily work out the
way you're hoping but if you just out of
the goodness of your heart do good then
that's definitely going to be much
better and don't even worry about the
karma don't just don't try and figure it
out just don't bother with it just do
what you think is right and good and
you're gonna be you're gonna be fairly
good follow your conscience especially
if you have one

I mean Islamic terrorists I mean blowing
up a School Bus full of children

thinking they're going to go to heaven
for that I mean it's not exactly Karma
they think God is going to reward them
but um yeah I mean

a real foolish you know like a bad
Buddhist could think similar things
maybe not that extreme and then again
maybe so

so I guess I kind of answered that one
so I'll just move on to the next
question here and this is from
bodhisatta969

and body SATA 969 says is it true that
nibana can be explained something like
this quote the Indians back then
believed in a fire element when you

light a match the fire element they
didn't have matches back then
okay I I just interrupted myself when
you light a match the fire element comes
and lights the match when you blow it
out it doesn't just go out but it goes
into The Ether unquote because of the
word extinction many people believe that
Buddhism is something like nihilism but
the Buddha is omnipresent even after his
death just at a different frequency this
is pretty much how a Buddhist teacher
explained it
what do you say to that that sounds
pretty good to me well ajanta nisaro was
uh he wrote a book like the the mind
like fire Unbound or something he calls

nibana unbinding which I think is a bad etymology

but um

the dogs acting up

well I think it's a bad etymology but

there is some truth to the fact that in ancient India

uh fire was a god Agni who was like the intermediary between people and the gods up in heaven you know he's sort of like the the god that's like the messenger to the other gods that lives here on this planet but it's like because he's a god he's like a cosmic kind of like a cosmic force and even if there's no fire actually there ugni is

there

and so when when you blow a fire out it

just goes back into an unmanifest state

you know as the agony is still there

it's just you know sort of like the the

old Alchemists in the west who believe

in this legista and stuff that was like

latent fire existing and anything that

can burn it was sort of an idea like

that

but um it doesn't really go into The

Ether I mean because we're an Extinction

yeah it's extinguishing

or blowing out nibana literally means

blowing out you know like the fire blows

out

but it doesn't really go anywhere and it

doesn't just cease to exist
so at least in ancient Indian uh belief
let's see Buddhism something like
nihilism yeah even a lot of really
intellectual Buddhists because they
can't accept any kind of mysticism or
anything like that they just have to say
well you just you're just cease to exist
or something
but the Buddha is omnipresent even after
his death well that's that's kind of
pushing it on just a different frequency
it's it's more like
like in quantum physics where they say
empty space can contain zero energy or
infinite energy and it's kind of both

true and it's just sort of like this
like an enigma like a paradox
it's like everything and nothing again I
go back to Hegel how he began his uh his
logic his his dialectic you begin with
pure being and then the antithesis to
Pure beings these the thesis is pure
being the antithesis is pure non-being
and according to Hegel they just merge
together they cannot be differentiated
because neither one of them has any kind
of discernible content
and so then you have to have the
synthesis
in which being a non-being sort of come
to exist through contrast
but uh

hopefully I didn't just wander too far
away here so it's it's yeah it's like
empty space can contain zero energy or
Infinite Energy it's like zero and
infinity

merge together

and

that's sort of the problem that you have
with like ultimate truth or like nibana
it's like the Hindus the vedantists
anyway will say the highest principle is
isn't Brahman is Atman and it's it's
just like this formless Consciousness
that pervades the entire universe the
Buddhists just don't go there you know
there you can't say it is and you can't

say it isn't but you have to say one or the other because if you're using human language because human language is dualistic so most religious people will say is and you know it's Brahman or God or Dao or whatever and a lot of Buddhists just say isn't it's just blowing out and you just don't talk about it

you know you don't don't reify the absolute and that's I mean that's one of the biggest misconceptions in Western Buddhism is people just intellectually trying to figure out ultimate truth and it just isn't going to happen
oh

so let's see here

those Buddhas omnipresent even after his death you know this is pretty much how the Buddhists yeah I mean it's that's a way of it's it's like a a jerry-rigged way of explaining it I mean and that's all you can do that's the best you can do

is uh jerry-rigged explanations of niblana because you cannot explain nibana

I mean you can use jerry-rigged explanations especially with regard to the ethical aspect of Nirvana but when you're dealing with the metaphysical aspect of nibono nothing you say is going to be valid

so I think I'll just move on to the next question here

um my buddy sells at 969

and he says the three bondages destroyed

in sewed upon us are personality belief

doubt about the Buddhist teachings and

attachment to rules and rights which is

the belief that performing rules and

rights is sufficient for liberation

in the Buddhist view aren't devout

Buddhists already sewed upon us

what can we do to become sotopona in

this life are you already a certain Upon

Our already beyond that

okay well I'm pretty sure bodhisatta 969

has seen

q and A's in the past in which I I talk

about how the the standard four stages
of sainthood sonapana sakuragami anagami
and araham probably do not originate
with the Buddha himself
that in the oldest texts that are
considered to be you know the earliest
strata of Buddhist literature soccer
dagamis aren't mentioned at all
sotopanos apparently are not Saints you
can have families of sotoponas that
monks aren't supposed to be relying
heavily upon because it could cause
hardships for them and then onigamis or
non-returners like the first several
sutras of the idiotica of the the kuriken
ikaya it's apparently using anagame as a

synonym for arahant

so

so I really I mean going with the four
stages of sainthood

saying that soddapaws are I mean they've
they've gone beyond self-view soccer

yeah

no Sakaya DT

uh doubt about the Buddha's teachings
and attachment to he says rules and
rights here but literally it's morality
and observance is Sila Bata

Sila is the morality rules I mean you
can call it rules but I mean it really
does mean morality and uh nabata is like
observances where it's you know it's not
really a moral or ethical thing it's

like a monk shaving his head and wearing
the brown robes that's that's more of an
observance than than morality because
it's morally neutral
and uh or just believing that only an
ordained monk can become enlightened or
become enlightened and stay alive for
more than you know one day or so I mean
that's that's essentially adherence to
morality and observances because I mean
that's saying you know you can't be
enlightened unless you go through this
ceremony and have your head shaved and
wear a brown robe
so let's see here
in Buddha's views aren't about Buddhists

already sewed upon us well that's what I've been saying from the beginning pretty much is that the original meaning of the sodapana was just simply someone who had entered upon dhamma has like seriously as a way of life you know I'd be a convert to Buddhism would be a soda upon it originally and then it got turned into a saint just as the four genres were just the four levels of of meditation and it's defined as right concentration in the mahasra and then it the right concentration became a superhuman mental state so even to become a soda Paula it's a superhuman mental state now according to Orthodox taravala and uh

yeah I mean maybe I'm wrong but I just I
just don't buy it

I think originally a sodapana was sort
of like a born-again Christian or
something where you just it's a convert
to Buddhism someone who has started you
know you know devoutly practicing dhamma
so what can we do to become sodaponos in
this life it depends on your definition
of soda Palm

just do your best and uh don't cling to
uh your personality belief you know
don't don't wallow an eye Me Mine
and uh you know do your best to
understand and follow the Buddhist
teachings

and uh don't think that following lists
of rules and observances is going to get
you enlightened with it not following
them is not going to get you a mind
so

that's that's that question and then are
you already a sodapana or already beyond
that I mean again I mean the the term
itself

is so dubious with regard to its meaning
and just saying that you know when
you're a sodapon you can no longer tell
a lie for example I mean you just can't
and there's this list of things that uh
just can't do and I mean if you're
freeing yourself

um maybe you can but you just don't sort

of like uh Jordan Peterson says one of
my favorite quotes of it is that you
should be able to be a monster and then
not be one but according to Orthodox
caravada once you become an aria you
just can't be a monster

but I think it would be more appraisal
you still have the capacity for it but
you just don't do it

so

am I already a soda Palmer or already
beyond that God yeah I don't know you
tell me

so I'll just move on to the next

question also from uh bodhisatta 969

one teacher said this if you read the

polytexts the people Buddha taught at
that time pretty quickly became soda
Palmas or arahans nowadays Buddhist
teachings are so obscure that even
Buddhists and monks can no longer easily
explain what Buddhism is actually about
that's why there are hardly any
Buddhists who awaken in this life
because the goal and the path are no
longer clear

your opinion on this well again I mean
you can't believe everything you read in
the text if you read about previous
Buddhas before our Buddha godama that
sometimes they were making our hearts
out of literally billions of people all
at the same time you know they give one

talk to this multitude of literally
billions of them like more than the
entire population of this Earth
and they all become morons
and I mean just because I mean the
Indians were really into this kind of
hyperbole you know just sort of
exaggeration
exaggeration exaggerating
uh both with regard to really high
numbers and like super tiny numbers you
know both ends
so let's see
so I mean
I'm sure that the Buddha because he was
an enlightened teacher assuming again

that enlightened teachers even exist
within the con the unenlightened context
of samsara

that uh yeah I mean he probably just
looked into you and see what you needed
to hear and tell you that like maharaji
neem curly bob up there he was like that
too I mean he would just look right
through you see exactly what you needed
and give it to you but even then if you
weren't ripe for enlightenment I mean he
wouldn't just say the magic words to get
you enlightened the Buddha couldn't do
that either the Buddha had like ordained
disciples like the the notorious group
of six

who I mean they were just rascally fools

even though I mean they were in
proximity with the Buddha they were
hearing his sermons and everything I
mean he couldn't he couldn't cure them
of their own foolishness they just
weren't ready yet and that's the way it
is with most people I've had one person
at least one person tell me that because
the Buddha rediscovered dhamma there was
no dhamma in this world before the time
of the Buddha and so you had all these
people that were ripe for enlightenment
but they didn't have the opportunity
because there wasn't any dhamma until the
Buddha rediscovered it and then they
just you know they're like yellow leaves

falling off a tree in a in October

during a windstorm

so that's one way of explaining it but

um nowadays it's according according to

this question here nowadays Buddhist

teachings are so obscure that even

Buddhists and monks can no longer easily

explain what Buddhism is all about yeah

well I mean it's corrupt now so a lot of

what they think

develop they believe is genuine dama

isn't

but what the Buddha was teaching I mean

that's obviously like pure buddhavachana

pure teachings and Buddha because he's

teaching it

but you know 2 000 years down the road

that gets corrupted and all this extra stuff gets added some important stuff maybe gets deleted

and uh also we're just not living in as inspired of a culture and inspired of an age as ancient India I mean in some ways I consider

like the Ganges Valley of the Buddhist time to be the Apex of of human civilization and it's been kind of downhill since then I mean in certain respects

I mean you had still had sociopathic Kings and robbers and bandits and all kinds of bad things going on he didn't have cures for malaria or or cholera you

know all these diseases and so forth
they didn't have cures for yet
but I mean now we're living in an age of
spiritual
mediocrity pretty much but there was
like real it was a ferment going on in
the Buddhist time it was uh really uh an
amazing amazing time
not just would go to the Buddha but I
mean there were so many spiritual
teachers there were people that were
literally torturing themselves to death
for the sake of Enlightenment or or
liberation
which the Buddha was teaching against I
mean you wouldn't need to teach against
it now because nobody's really doing it

unless they're just like mentally
unhinged or something

so

let's see my opinion on this I guess I
guess I just gave my opinion so I'm just
going to move on to the next question

here this is from a wet fart

and wet fart leaves a time stamp which
is 39 minutes and 29 seconds from the
previous q a which was number 61.

and then uh it's it's with regard to a
question with regard to I don't remember
exactly what the question was but I was
talking about Buddhist ethics and how
like inhumanly uncompromising they are
and I gave the example you've got a a

terrorist who has planted a bomb in a city a thickly populated city and only the terrorist knows where that bomb is but the police have captured that terrorist and he's not talking so would it be the ethical thing to do to torture that terrorist in order to make him tell where the bomb is in order to save ten thousand lives and from the Buddhist point of view it's no from the Buddhist point of view it is unethical for you to torture that terrorist even though if you've tortured him Ten Thousand Lives will be saved because the Ten Thousand Lives aren't on you they're on him you know he's the one who's killing

them and you're just you're just messing
him up

so

um that's that's what I was talking
about in the previous q a and uh so what
fart here he gives the time stamp was
when I'm I assume that I'm discussing
that and he says what if it is tickle
torture to save ten thousand people or
what if it is 7.5 billion people then
can he torture

and the thing is I mean you just have to
make the call yourself sometimes you
just take the hit you know it's like
sometimes it may be best to do a little
bit of bad like torturing a terrorist in

order to result in a greater good even
though you're taking the hit
you know sort of like the a dharmic view
of a soldier is someone who is like a
tragic hero and that he is sacrificing
his own spiritual welfare for the sake
of others
and

I think I think you just have to make
the call yourself sometimes it may be
worthy or worthwhile to take the hit
then uh just let just callously let
people know thousands or hear 7.5
billion people die
so

yeah I think it's

it's like your call to make and it's I

think it would be the uh the heroic
thing to do

would be to take the hit just for the
sake of helping others I mean I did that
to a small degree as a monk for example
I'm living out under the Rock Ledge out
in the middle of nowhere just very rural
Burma you know it's just Hillbillies
Burmese Hillbillies living there and uh
one one time one of my supporters more
or less of a friend of mine comes and
tells me that his daughter has had
malaria for I think it was like six
weeks

and I mean I couldn't have full super
malaria for six weeks I'd be dead long

before the six weeks was up I mean the
Burmese they have a certain resistance
to it

and uh he said that they went to the
Village medical officer and got some
pills which are probably chloroquine and
it's obsolete there's so many strains of
malaria that has evolved to tolerate
chloroquine that it doesn't always work
and so I have an awesome state of the
art I think it was methaquin or
something that at the time it was it was
reliable you know there weren't strains
of malaria that had evolved to survive
it yet

and so I gave him some of my malaria
pills even though it's against the rules

I was breaking rule by giving them to him because a monk isn't supposed to be practicing medicine you know dispensing medications or anything like that but it's a Duke of Defense requiring confession but I figured you know it's worth the hit

or or like a monk who lets a pretty girl drown because it's against the rules for a monk to be touching pretty girls much less giving mouth-to-mouth resuscitation to them then I mean if someone's dying I mean you might as well just do the break the rule and do the penance so I mean it's the the way that like ancient Indian ethics worked was

practically inhuman this I mean it's
true I'm not saying it's not true that
you are taking a hit I mean you you
aren't doing a certain amount of Bad
Karma that you might not do at all if
you just sat there and let the people
die
but

I mean there is a certain compassion
that is meritorious that is good karma
involved even though you're taking the
hit by doing this thing that you're not
supposed to do supposedly
so tickle torture to save 10 000 people
I mean it's each person has the right to
make their own moral decisions along
these lines

so I mean you know of a terrorist you
can just tickle them to make them tell
you where the bomb is
or if it's 7.5 billion people I mean
there are a lot of people nowadays I
think there've always been a lot of
people who think that the world would be
better off if everybody just died anyway
but I mean we all have to make our own
choices so I don't have any uh yes or no
questions or yes or no answers with
regard to that one it's like everyone
else to just make their own decisions
are you willing to kill one person to
save ten it's like the trolley car
ethics problems

from the Orthodox Buddhist point of view
you just stand there and let the people
get squished

so wet fart asks another one here are
you enlightened and how do you know if
you are

golly well if I'm enlightened then so
are you and if you're not enlightened
then neither am I that's the best answer
I can give with regard to that one
foreign

this is from Fred and Fred says why was
Genghis sent away and Genghis was my dog
and I love Genghis and Genghis loved me
and now he's living on a farm in Ohio
and he was sent away mainly because
we're moving to a different house

on this house

it's uh

I mean it's it's sort of it's on a steep hill and it's kind of a big property and it's just this constant battle against entropy keeping it maintained and I work full time I work hard I come home and I'm tired and for me to work all day and then come home and do like yard work and stuff I mean that's just slavery I mean you work all day you come home and then you got to keep working you got to work all on the weekends that's slavery I don't want to live that way my sweetheart I mean she's got enough to do already she doesn't want to have to keep

you know doing all the work herself
with regard to maintaining the property
and so forth so we're just moving to uh
a nicer house with a smaller yard and
there's also I mean this wasn't my call
but there's like a homeowners
association an HOA and like dogs that
live in the backyard and bark a lot are
probably not
not acceptable
to such uh such places and so I have to
admit that
um Genghis I wouldn't have sent him away
if I could if I didn't have to
acknowledge that he'd be better off
living on a 40-acre farm where he can
just run around and just bark his guts

out if he wants to then stay in this
little backyard that we're going to be
moving to with with the homeowners
association breathing down genghis's
collar

so I mean I was sad to see him go and
it's like

it's it wasn't my attachment to him
personally so much I mean there was some
of that too I guess I'm human you know I
love my dog I don't want to just send
him away but it was like a feeling of
like I'd betrayed him you know he loved
and trusted me
and then I send him away
so it was more that that bothered me

than the separation just just for
separation's sake you know I'm not going
to see him again maybe
unless I go to a farm in Ohio

um

but I mean that is always bothered me
like I'd make a really terrible farmer
like raising livestock I mean I was I've
considered that if if we had chickens I
should just take responsibility and just
kill our own chickens just because I
could make sure they're killed humanely
again this is a choice of taking the hit
you know

is being the tragic hero or whatever

but I mean

like in Dante's Inferno the lowest pit

of Hell is it is reserved for Traders
it's like people that pretend to be your
friend and then stab you in the back and
the reason why it was the bottom pit of
Hell to where the Traders went is of
course because Judas Iscariot who is
like you know the villain in in the
Bible the Christian Bible that's what he
did you know he stabbed Jesus in the
back metaphorically
and so

um at the very bottom like in Dante's
Inferno the hell is shaped like a funnel
and sort of like the ant lion at the
bottom is Satan and he's got three
mouths and in one of his mouths is Judas

Iscariot he's chewing on him like a
cigar butt and then the second of his
mouth is Brutus who betrayed Julius
Caesar and stabbed him in the groin or
something I can't remember where he
stabbed him

and then the third the third mouth is is
reserved it's still empty it's waiting
for for Mr 666 the Antichrist

uh which is kind of strange that Satan
who's the bad guy and on the side

supposedly of antichrist is going to be
chewing on him you know you think that
Satan would be kind of like advocating
for the bad guys but um

I mean it's like

betraying them it's it's and like a

farmer does this all the time it's like
you got this Village farmer
you know in Burma let's say and he
raises these Pigs and the Pig gets a
sore on his skin the farmer will be out
there smearing the ointment on there and
he's feeding it every day and he's you
know keeping the dogs away from it you
know he's keeping it safe and the pig
comes to to trust this farmer and then
the day before a festival the farmer
goes out there with the big butcher
knife and cuts the pig's throat or or
however it is that they kill pigs I've
heard pigs dying the day before
festivals in Buddhist Burma is it's an

awful screeching screaming gurgling

sound that they make

and it's like I mean that's it seems

like a pretty bad thing to do

you know it's like you earn this

animal's trust by taking care of it at

everything and then

and then finally you just totally betray

them and it was it was definitely a much

lesser

severity of transgression with with my

dog Genghis because I have to admit I

mean he's probably much better off

on on a 40 Acre Farm than he would be in

this little rectangle of yard

in in the house that we're moving to

so that's the main reason why we're

getting rid of why I uh I consent it to
get rid of Genghis I mean if it wasn't a
situation like that I would have just
put my foot down and say we're keeping
Genghis

but I have to admit he's in a better
place now I hope

you know he's running around and going
fishing and stuff

um I was told that he went fishing the
other day I asked if he caught anything
but he was just apparent he was he's not
trusted to hold a fishing pole yet I
guess you know he's sort of still
learning the ropes of that kind of thing
so

make gingus be happy

and I'll just move on to the next

question here

and this is from rui

and rui says hello Ponyo should we

assume the existence of an infinite or a

limited number of past lives considering

considering an infinite number of past

lives did the Buddha appear into just a

section of them right before his

Awakening there seems to be a logical

problem here because contemplating an

infinite number of past lives would

require an infinite amount of time and

therefore the following moment Awakening

would always be Out Of Reach

well I mean this is sort of like xeno's

paradox paradoxes he had more than one
where I mean you can have an infinity
this big you know you can have an
Infinity in a grain of sand according to
uh William Blake

and that's right I mean there's an
infinite number of points in that grain
of sand

so

um yeah I don't it might be that he just
can't he just contemplated them all
simultaneously with an infinite mind a
mind that had just become infinite
but I mean with regard to this should we
assume the existence of an infinite or
limited number of past lives no

that is the answer I mean it's like
um there are certain questions that the
Buddha would not answer one is is is the
world

uh finite or infinite like the cosmos or
is the world Eternal or non-eternal and
I mean that Eternal one that's that's
kind of the one we're talking about here
and the Buddha just I mean you just
don't bother don't even go there
so I mean it's just you can't really
know the answer anyway because it's
ultimate truth is beyond the perceiving
mind

so let's see

uh uh uh yeah I don't think there's
really a logical problem

but uh and with regard to you should we
assume the existence of an infinite or a
limited number of past lives just go
with unknown

an unknowable number of past lives
so then rui has sort of a a second
question here connected to the first one
furthermore doesn't the notion of a
limited number of past lives violate the
notion that A Moment Of Consciousness
can only come from another moment of
Consciousness which I've heard of
teachers from teravada to vajrayana
well

yeah everything has to have a cause
anything that arises has to have a Cause

or more likely uh is any number of
causes because things never have just
one cause

um

but I mean if if we assume that
Consciousness ultimately is formless and
infinite and because it's formless and
infinite you can't really say that it
exists or doesn't exist so I'm already
speaking with regard to what is invalid
to say but even so I mean it's sort of
like

quantum physics you got empty space
which has got zero contains zero energy
and infinite energy and you've got
particles and any particles just
appearing you know out of empty space

out of the quantum field

and then generally they just

read disappear again

go back and they just Collide and go

back into nothingness

um so

I think Consciousness could be that way

I've already I've already uh in previous

cues and A's q and A's I've uh given a

few possibilities of how new karmic

streams can arise you know so they would

have a beginning

and both of them strangely from this

strange book called Seth speaks and one

is this Karma Can it can just break off

it can just split the karmic stream can

just split into two

um so that would be one way of

multiplying beings you know some of them

are becoming enlightened while you're

getting new ones like getting spun off

like a spark or something coming off the

side of the main karmic stream of some

larger greater being or something and

another one is that we are when we like

dream at night

we are Conjuring up beings that don't

really exist or at least they didn't

exist until we dream them you know I'm

sure you've all had dreams where you

know you're interacting with someone

that doesn't exist in reality I mean

you've never met this person before it's

just your your subconscious imagination
is Conjuring up this person in your
dream

and according to the Seth book that
these beings that we are Conjuring up in
our dreams and our Daydreams and so
forth they have like this the faintest
wispiest shadowiest little existence but
they continue doing they continue to
have their own existence you know
they've got their own momentum going and
that's how like that's another way that
that Consciousness like a karmic stream
can can sort of be generated by another
comic stream
which is kind of a weird idea I'm not

I'm not vouching for it necessarily but
it's it's really an intriguing idea to
me

so in both of those cases uh

Consciousness can come from another
moment of Consciousness but at the same
time it's not violating anything

um to have new karmic streams being
generated from older karmic streams

but then again it could be sort of like

uh you know the the particle and the

anti-particle just poofing you know into
existence out of what apparently is

empty space because you know just

infinite energy is permeating the entire
universe or you know the simile of the

block of marble which I'm continually

yammering about

or like in the the Dow you know from the
Dow came the the one from the one came
to two and the two came the ten thousand
things

so it's all just sort of generating from
this

Infinite Source

so it's already there I mean nothing's
really generated these Karma extremes
don't ultimately exist

so I mean that's another thing it's like
um I mean these moment of Consciousness
or or like these these karmic streams
they are not ultimately real anyway
so I mean

I don't know what I mean but they're not ultimately real

they're just potential statues contained within that block of marble and they're always going to be there in every possible statue has to be contained in that block of Marvel

so I'll just move on to the next

question here this is from White Ash

Piper

and white ash Piper says are you

familiar with red Pines translation or

does he

or docs he did on Mountain Hermits he

visited in China well I've read one

translation by Red Pine and that was the

poems of hanshan

and

I wasn't extremely impressed by Red
Pines translation

I didn't see any documentaries that he
did about Mountain Hermits although
hanshan whose poems Red Pine translated
was a mountain hermit in China in like
medieval China

and uh it's weird it's one thing I
learned about Chinese Buddhism or
Chinese religion medieval Chinese
religion from reading that translation
is hanshan is seen as a kind of
enlightened Sage you know he's like a
Zen Sage or something but you read the
translations I mean the legend and the

reality are don't exactly fit together
very well because Han Shan a lot of the
time he's like complaining about
um apparently what happened hanshan he
was like this

Chinese Chan Buddhist Sage who also read
some taoism so he was you know he was
sort of like the polymath sage
um

he was uh

like a clerk or some sort of some kind
of bureaucrat who was on the wrong side
of like a a coup attempt or some such
and he just had to flee into the forest
in order to keep his head attached to
his neck

and some of his poems he's complaining

about having to live out in the woods
he's he's complaining because he had
like a limp or something and in order to
be oh what were they called

I'm continually having these lapses the
like the the Chinese scholar who became
he had to pass all these tests in order
to become a mandarin that's it in order
to become like this high level

bureaucrat

like a minister of State

he had to pass all these tests including
physical tests yet they had to be the
most perfect

Chinese people Chinese men you know the
most learned the most you know

physically perfect the most mentally
perfect that they could find and then
they got these high positions and
because hanshan when he was like a lower
ranking bureaucrat I think he got thrown
off of a horse or something and hurt his
leg and he walked with a limp after that
so he could never be a mandarin he could
never be like a top ranking official
because you had to be physically perfect
and he wasn't and he's complaining about
that too and one time he sees some of
the Emperors and like concubines you
know some of the Harem the Imperial
Harem they're out like playing out in
the woods and stuff and he's just like
sighing and just kind of miserable over

it

so I mean I did learn from Red Pines
translation just how unreliable Legends
can be especially Chinese legends about
great sages when you read their actual
words and I mean they have some wisdom
but at the same time you know they're
guys

so

am I so I'll just get back to the
question you know I'm just digressing so
this is I have bad news here this is
gonna be a six hour long q a
uh so what Ash Piper says are you
familiar with red Pine's translation or
does or docs he does on our Mountain

Hermits yeah well that's like I say
that's the only Red Pine translation I
read I read it when I was living in a
cave in Burma somebody sent it to me so
I read it and it was interesting you
know I read the whole thing
ah I think in the introduction he's
talking about how he and some famous
Buddhist scholar got drunk on Whiskey
and relying on their backs on some bed
philosophizing
which uh and it's typical of
um like Western Buddhist philosophers I
guess like like the beatniks you know
they would do that kind of stuff too get
stinking drunk and write co-ons and
stuff

but uh that's neither here or there so
I'll just move on to the next question

here this is this is from Josh

and Josh says I have a question about
the similarities between yogic
philosophy and Buddhism

I have been reading the yoga sutras by
patanjali and I've been and I've noticed
many similar Concepts and ideas for
example there are the eight limbs of
yoga and the noble Eightfold Path

yamas the eightyamas or abstentions like
no killing no lying no the five the five
yamas

not eight the five yamas are abstentions
like no killing no lying no stealing and

the five precepts

uh yoga also has a strong meditative practice laid out similar to Buddhist Meditation it leads me to believe that as Buddhism started gaining Traction in India yoga philosophy emerged as a competitor and absorbed most of the philosophical ideas and framework but with a distinctly Hindu flavor do you think there's any truth to these ideas

um well I'll tell you

well I'll tell you

um yoga originated in a non-vedic non-buddhist philosophical movement called sankya in fact sometimes uh well I'll get back to that so you have this

system called sankya which was a
shramana movement it was similar to
Jainism ajivakayism and Buddhism and
they had a kind of elaborate
metaphysic and I I've read about it I've
studied it a little bit but I'm not
really qualified to describe sankya
metaphysics but um
it's it's older than Buddhism
at least sankya is but then at some
point in Ancient India some of sankya
split off and this the followers of this
offshoot of sankya they acknowledge the
authority the authority of The Vedas and
became a branch of Hinduism
so then you've got the old Sanka is

called atheistic sankhya and then you've
got theistic Sonja which is now Hindu
yoga

and

they followed a lot of the same

Traditions as the other the other uh

ancient Indian schools like the five

precepts he talks about the five yamas

or abstentions almost all of the the the

ancient aesthetic schools including the

brahmanas and the jains they had their

own equivalent of five precepts in the

first four tended to be the same and the

fifth one was variable so in Buddhism

it's no no

um

wine ale or intoxicants which cause

heatlessness or cloudy cloudedness of
mind

um so there was a lot of similarity just
with regard to

um just sort of like philosophical

layout and so forth Just because of the

the close proximity and sort of like

debating back and forth and just

intermixing of ideas and so forth

so uh yoga originally began as sankhya

which is one of the oldest philosophical

movements still in existence I think

because it still exists uh within the

context of Hindu yoga but it's older

than than Hinduism older even than

vaishnavism I'm pretty sure

so

I guess that's I'm itching my I'm

scratching my leg

okay

so like that would be my take on on yoga

and why it is similar to Buddhism they

both arose from the tramana movement the

non-vadic philosophical movement

probably which which probably originated

in the Indus Valley Civilization or

thereabouts it existed

um in India until I mean The Vedic

indoorians

invaded India they brought their Vedas

with them or at least the oldest parts

of the rig Vader they brought with them

and so the aesthetic movements kind of

went underground for a while I mean it was still the indigenous people would still largely be following the the this sort of atheistic so-called pessimistic kind of a mechanistic kind of approach to spirituality

um from which Buddhism uh I mean it definitely has roots going back into this oldest

um this older layer of of like

spirituality in India and as does

Jainism as does sankya which is then uh

like I say part of it split off and

acknowledged The Authority the authority

of The Vedas and just got absorbed into

into what is now called Hinduism

so

I'm pretty sure that would that would
account for the similarities

um so I'll just move on to uh Josh's
next question here

he says also I love the episodes with
pneuma about paganism and neoplatonism
do you think you could have him on again
to talk more about western esotericism
or how to create an authentic Pagan
spirituality without woke nonsense yes
um yeah it's possible yeah numa's still
a member of the Discord server I'm
pretty sure

and uh it's just the thing is lately I
haven't been doing a lot of interviews
and so forth mainly because of all this

stuff going on with getting the house
ready to sell and like

uh it is just a lot of uproar and stuff
going on

and a certain amount of worldly samsaric
stress

so yeah it's a definite possibility I I
assume pneumo would be willing to do
another video with me

and uh

yeah

yeah there's there's a very good chance
there's also uh like um Auto my friend
Otto will probably do more videos
together

Brian Rue we'll probably do some do some

more I heard uh just recently that uh
where I saw just recently that he was
arrested for hate speech
which I mean hate speech nowadays you
just all you have to do is just say that
girls don't have a PP like boys do and
you can get arrested in Canada for hate
speech
and uh also
um Stevens will probably do at least one
or two more videos until we run out of
stuff to talk about
we almost did one a while back but he
had to he had to go somewhere he was on
a train or something and didn't want to
do a video with me on a train
so I'll just move on to the next

question and this is from Mr Cool Whip
he used to be just plain Cool Whip but
now he's he's Mr Cool Whip which causes
me to suspect that maybe in a future
date he may become sir Cool Whip or even
lower the Cool Whip because if we're
getting more and more formal
but anyway Mr Cool Whip says
the Buddhist path at the extreme leads
to a mind with nothing to say silence is
painful and awkward for normies it's
useless it's anti-social the inevitable
outcome seems to be a solitary silent
life in deep contemplation how does one
reconcile the Buddhist path with this
social reality are they irreconcilable

well for starters I would just say that
at the top here it says the Buddhist
path at the extreme leads to a mind with
nothing to say but the Buddha had plenty
to say he talked a lot he wandered
around teaching a lot
so the thing is I mean the problem here
is like
it's sort of like Zen on the cushion
versus Zen in the marketplace or I was
talking earlier
um like in a previous q a about Ramana
maharshi and how he became enlightened
and so forth and when he first became
enlightened again assuming Enlightenment
even means anything in Islams are in
context

but he was silent I mean he was like
mute

for I think it was something like two
years and then slowly he started being
able to integrate

like what he had this mystical
illumination that he experienced with
you know just being a human being
navigating samsara

and in Zen you know there's the saying
that Zen in the marketplace is 10 000
times better than Zen on the cushion so
what happens is in order to become
enlightened

um you have to quiet your mind or get it
as still as quiet as as you can because

what you're trying to do is you're
trying to see the the essence of your
mind and not just the the various forms
so you get distracted by all the various
forms all these perceptions all this
this supposed meaning
you know it just distracts you and you
get lost in this this I'm sorry symbolic
meaning and you don't penetrate to the
essence you know you don't break through
the surface of all these forms and see
the essence that underlies it and so it
becomes easier to see the essence if you
have fewer and fewer forms to distract
you
so I mean if you can get rid of all the
forms all that's left is Essence and

then it's way easier to see the essence
but the trick is
to continue seeing the essence even
after the the forms come back
so that's like seeing the essence when
your mind is still and there's there's
no forms to distract you when you're in
deep meditation that's Zen on the
cushion according to the the
the saying that I was referring to but
when you can still see the essence when
all the noise and the commotion has come
back that's then in the marketplace
so it's like
um the real trick to an enlightened to
an enlightened being I suppose if it's a

trick at all is you just continue seeing
the essence even with all the commotion
going on and then you can just do as you
please

because it's all God so to speak
as he used as neem curly Baba used to
say sub ishwar high it's all God
no matter what it is

although of course the Buddhist would
use a different term than God
so let's see

it is true though silence is painful and
awkward for normies

especially very gregarious you know
people oriented people they it's it's
just scary they a lot of them just can't
stand it like solitary confinement is

it's more scary for a lot of hardened
criminals like convicts in a prison
they'd rather receive like corporal
punishment they didn't really receive a
beating than have to sit in a room in
silence it's just they just can't stand
it

so yes they so with regard to uh this uh
silence and all the the noise yes they
are they are reconcilable because once
you penetrate to through the silence you
know you get things silent enough that
you can penetrate to the essence then
when the the noise and the commotion and
the the forms the symbols and stuff come
back then you can just see it all as the

essence and not be distracted by the forms and that's how they are reconcilable because you can have both at the same time they're not mutually exclusive

like Nirvana and samsara are not mutually exclusive reality and the illusion are not mutually exclusive the essence of a thing and its form are not mutually exclusive

so I'll just move on to uh Mr Cool

Whip's next question

venerable sir why are you critical of the mahasi method do you think it can lead to full Enlightenment what are the alternative practices of mindfulness sorry batana that leads to ipasana could

you tell us about your practice what it
is how it works what it's called Etc
thank you

well I am critical of the mahasi method
um for a number of reasons first of all
um it seems to me that they never get
Beyond just the perceptual busy work of
noting
um

I think some teachers of the mahasi
method may say it's it's you stop noting
and you just your mind becomes more and
more quiet but like uh
a lot of a lot of the teachers of the
mossy method it's just it's like it
requires constant effort like upondita

used to say that noting when you're when
you're practicing the mahasi method it's
like you're hitting something with a
stick it's like this constant I mean
there is no effortless noting there's
always this effort where you're
concentrating on this thing and noting
noting noting noting and you if you
never get beyond that
then it's very difficult to to really
see through all the commotion to the
essence the underlying essence

I remember once a long time ago asking
who was one of the wisest monks I knew
what his opinion of the mahasti method
was and he says you can get benefit by
practicing it but it is a limited method

and I agree with that I think that the
mahasi method is good for beginners
maybe intermediate but the thing is with
the mahasi method especially the upon
upondita's version of it and that's the
main

um School of the mahasi school the sub
School of Mazi school that I'm familiar
with because I spent some time at
panditarama and practiced the method
there is you are supposed to experience
what is called nyanzin in Burmese that's
the wepasana Insight knowledges in the
correct order and so you go to your
interview and you you tell the Seattle
your experiences

and I mean he'll be completely
unimpressed unless you see that we
possess Insight knowledge that you're
supposed to see
and then he'll he'll like you know write
it down or something
and uh I don't think that we passed an
Insight knowledge as we're ever taught
by the Buddha there's no sutta that has
the the enumerated we pause the Insight
knowledges you know the correct full
list of them it's not there in the
oldest texts it's it's like a an
artifact of the commentarial tradition
and also it relies heavily on abhidham
and the commentarial tradition which I
do not consider to be authentic

teachings of the Buddha is to sort of a
corruption and like I was saying earlier
I mean it never really gets Beyond
um an intermediate stage and what
happens is you're supposed to be turned
into a sodapana like I've had people say
that you know like mahasi Center or
um

are just like sodapon of factories you
know you got normies coming in one door
and then they come out arya's out the
other door and it used to be that the
mahasi uh tradition would actually give
you like a diploma when they figured you
had become a saint you get like this
same diploma

and I think I'm pretty sure they stopped
doing that

because some of the Saints I mean

they're just even though they're

declared Saints they don't act in a very

saintly way I've uh I know of two monks

two Burmese monks that were declared

Arias by upandita himself who finally

realized that they weren't really Arias

one of them strangely was oxiano he was

declared an Arya by upondita and he he

knew he really wasn't one so he just

went off and started his own tradition

or so I've been told another one was a

monk uh a friend of mine that I mean if

you knew him you knew for a fact he

wasn't in Arya because he was just the

crustiest

um kind of

I mean he just had a lot of Dosa or or

hate in him I mean he just he just

despised the human race

for the most part he liked me for some

reason but

um yeah he was really hard to get along

with for most people

he was declared a siddha by upandita and

he said that for a while he thought he

might be one but then finally he

realized he wasn't

which is a credit to him because when

you're declared a saint by some famous

meditation Master uh you just want to

like cling to that you know I'm a saint
I'm in Arya and it takes a certain
amount of maturity and wisdom to realize
that well I think he was mistaken laughs
so there's a number I mean an upandita I
mean when he would sit in meditation he
was one of the senior Disciples of of uh
the mahasi method of mahasi Seattle
himself

and uh I mean he was just an angry old
man I mean he just like he it was almost
like he hated me on site it was It was
kind of weird I went to to uh
an interview because I wanted to
meditate there for a few months
and I told him that you know I've been a
monk for like six years at the time and

I was still having a lot of dachshund or
like agitation of mind you know just
Restless mind which is typical of
westerners because we're like compulsive
thinkers

and he just looks at me like he's a
plumber investigating leaky pipes and he
says have you ever taken drugs

and I said well yeah I mean almost every
Western monk has at least smoked some
weed you know and I said you know I'm
taking drugs that's it drug addiction
has damaged your brain

and I said well I've never been addicted
to anything not even tobacco it's just a
nervous High Strung disposition runs in

my family my mother is the same way and
then without skipping a beat he says
then it is a combination of drug
addiction and mental illness
and I was just the brain damage drug
addict the whole rest of the time I was
there he just did not like me at all
just from the very get-go
and uh you just look at mahasi Arias
it's like you you go to a mahasi center
like like panditarama you can see who
the Arias are who the Saints are because
they're the ones who aren't meditating
they're the ones who are like listening
to the radio and and talking and and
like reading newspapers and just walking
around goofing off because once once

you've you've got your diploma so to
speak once you've become a mahasi
sodapono then you don't have to practice
anymore

and I just don't think it works that way
not necessarily anyway

so I've got a number of reasons why uh
I am critical of the mahasi method I
think there are certain flaws in its
reasoning like effortless like the whole
idea of noting and it's like you've
graduated the Course once you've been
determined to be a soda Palm
and just observing the the Arias that
are produced like I was had this old
doctor monk he was he was a surgeon

before he became a monk and after he retired he became a monk in his old age he was telling me that he was spending time at the mahasi center and while he was there one of the teachers and you can't be a teacher of the mossy method until you finish the course of becoming Arya one fine day he just uh goes into the office and steals a bunch of money and then runs off with one of the female meditators is never seen again so I mean there's all kinds of that kind of stuff happening and I mean you can get benefit from practicing the mahasi method but uh if if like somebody announces to you yeah there was a mahasi retreat and 17 people became arya's

there yeah I would take that with a
pinch of salt

I think it's supposed to be a grain of
Salvage take a whole pinch just just for
the hell of it

so yeah I guess I've answered that
question well enough oh wait can I see
the second part is can you tell us about
your practice what it is how it works
what it's called I don't do formal
practice anymore

so I don't do formal sitting meditation
anymore so my practice such as it is
nowadays is a certain amount of
asceticism

like not just getting up early in the

morning five o'clock in the morning to
go to work and uh just mindfulness
just being mindful which sometimes
involves me uh mindfully observing
myself when I'm cussing at some idiot on
the highway who just behaved like an
idiot on the highway
um and sometimes I just still do
spontaneous oming
just for some reason it's uh ohm just
starts repeating itself through me
so that's really about all that's left
of my formal Buddhist Meditation
practice
so maybe I shouldn't be criticizing old
who pandita so much
but uh I think I'll just move on to the

next question here from Mr Cool Whip and
his next question is what's your
interpretation of godal's incompleteness
theorem could it be
a paradoxical mathematical proof of
nibano well I would say first and
foremost that uh more well over two
hours here
that uh there is no proof of nibana you
cannot prove because nibana is off the
scale and any kind of proof is going to
be some saric a samsaric phenomenon and
you cannot prove what is not in samsara
you know what is not a some sort
phenomenon by means of some saric
phenomena is

they're they're every in in that sense
they're reasonable you cannot prove
nibana you cannot prove anyone is
enlightened

for example

but uh I have read goggles or I have
read about godel's incompleteness
theorem in a book that also mentions a
lot of Zen and that is

um go to Escher Bach an eternal Golden
Braid

by

I don't remember his name

so yeah go to Escher Bach and eternal
golden raid and he's using the
incompleteness theorem as a way of
pointing out that

you can't use rationality

to

come to ultimate truth

so I mean it's not the same as proving

nibana but it is proving the limitations

of any kind of samsaric attempt at

knowing ultimate truth because there are

some things that you just can't say

there's I mean there's always going to

be things you can't true things that you

can't arrive at was any kind of

systematic method

so my interpretation of goggles

incompleteness theorem yeah I mean

eventually I ultimately it boiled down

to self self-reference that you can make

statements like this statement is false
that are neither true nor false because
if this statement really is false then
it's true but it's true and false at the
same time which is impossible

so

so you can with within any kind of like
rational system

if you can become self-referential you
reach this Paradox and the system kind
of breaks down

and it cannot reach ultimate truth

because there's always going to be like
problems like that or true statements
that cannot be made

within the within the context of the
system

so yeah rationality is incomplete it is
incapable of arriving at ultimate truth
it's just a mathematical way of trying
one of us one of many possible
mathematical ways of stating that I mean
you're never going to understand Reality
by thinking about it
so I'll just move on to the next
question because I mean we've been at
this for well over two hours and uh I
still got a ways to go here
so this is from Tim the enchanter
and my sweetheart was actually
suggesting that I skip skip a week and
just do like twice as many next weekend
and that that really would be six hours

I think

so anyways Tim the enchanter says

if there is conventional truth and the

ultimate truth and according to the

latter there are neither men nor women

why the Buddha didn't want to ordain

bakunies only because well I mean the

whole ordination of monks and so forth

is within the context of conventional

truth

and in within the context of

conventional truth there are men and

women and men and women are not the same

and when you've got celibate men and

celibate women interacting with each

other who are maybe sexually frustrated

and horny as hell it causes problems

I think that's the main reason also women were in a somewhat different social position back in those days in in India and they just couldn't live the same lifestyle as men just wandering around homeless in forests was just too dangerous for women and they were forbidden to do that so that I mean even when they were ordained the Buddha thought it was a bad idea he gets talked into it by his cousin Ananda to allow his his uh auntie hyphen stepmother to be the first ordained nun and Ananda talks about it and letting it into ordaining women which he didn't want to do and he says

all right but now you've done it now
Buddhism is only going to last half as
long because women have been ordained
so and that's all within the the context
of conventional truth because ultimate
truth is really wordless
it's just off the scale
but then again I mean it also reminds me
that uh according to abhidham
which is official
like authoritative terrible Buddhist
Orthodox Doctrine even though men and
women are not ultimately real maleness
and femaleness are ultimate realities I
don't think that's true but that's what
amidhama says
so still you'd have the distinction

between if not men and women at least
the distinction between male and female
so we'll just move on to the next
question here from Tim the enchanter
there are some who call him Tim
do you have some cool date for the
wedding yet

uh yeah we're still planning on getting
wet and getting uh married I should try
to say wedded and married at the same
time I do that sometimes

and it's uh going to be on a certain
date next May provisionally

I mean it's not really
set in stone exactly what day it's going
to be but we have a pretty good idea

it's going to be like the anniversary of the first time we met in person which was in May so I'll just uh move on to the next question here this is from Garrett and Garrett says would you please comment on any insight in this quote quote the largest part of what we call personality is determined by how we're we have opted to defend ourselves against anxiety and sadness unquote and again I don't know how to pronounce French names I just mispronounced them on purpose

did the Buddha speak about personality or personality types is personality just a collection of habit patterns

well with regard to uh I'll answer the

last question first that's I'd say
personality is just a collection of
habit patterns yeah I'd say yeah to that
um but going back to the first question
before getting to the second question I
would say uh see comment on any insight
in this quote and the quote again is the
largest part of what we call personality
is determined by how we've opted to
defend ourselves against anxiety and
sadness

um I don't see it that way I think it's
possible that that's true but I would
say that I mean from a biological point
of view most of what we call personality
is just

like inherent Human Nature and it varies from person to person just as the temperaments of dogs vary you know we're not gonna all have the exact same human nature that they're going to be temperaments that we've been like inherited from our our ancestors and so forth which isn't really Buddhist but I have a degree in biology so I do look at things from a biological point of view sometimes even though they're sort of irreconcilable

Buddhism and biology are not they don't fit together perfectly

so

yeah I'd say a lot of it is how we've opted to defend ourselves against

anxiety and sadness but um yeah I'm
skeptical that that is the largest part
of what we call personality
and um

let's see

I mean it could be arguably the most
important part for some people
but um

yeah that's that's really kind of a
it'd be hard to verify that I don't know
how you'd quantify something like that
so uh I'll just get to the middle
question here did the Buddha speak about
personality or personality types
um I'm sure he spoke about personality
to some degree but

um theravada Buddhism does

have six main personality types that you
can read about this in the *visuddhi Magga* I
don't think that this is straight out of
the *suttas*

which is the central commentary to uh
the *visuddhi Magga* has six main personality
types

and it's like the *Lobha* temperament the
Dhamma temperament the *moha* temperament
and then there's like the opposite of
that and uh it's like the *faith*

temperament the *intellect* temperament
and then there's like an *Enlightenment*
temperament or something like that

uh it's been a long time since I've read
it and uh

so yeah there's six main personality types and

um there can be a mixture you can be sort of a combination of two main ones or three or something like that

um so there is some there is some discussion of Personality or personality types uh especially in in Louis City manga

um and different people will uh I mean different personality types

um they do better with different kinds of meditation for example and also it's kind of ironic that the dose of temperament the person who's like grumpy and complaining doesn't like people

doesn't like the world in a certain
certain

way has an advantage because they're
more likely to just kind of detach from
the world because they don't like it and
it can actually help them become
enlightened more quickly than someone
who is you know very loving or whatever
so I had some of that myself I remember
once when I was a junior monk just
reading this in the wee City manga going
to my teacher and asking him you know
what temperament he thought I was he
just started laughing he said he didn't
doubt of temperament because I was when I
first became a monk I was disillusioned
when I realized that most monks really

are not trying to become enlightened In
This Very life so I was disillusioned
and sullen a lot of the time grumpy
I can still be grumpy and you can just
ask my sweetheart someday she'll tell
you that I can still be grumpy
so let's see I'll just move on to
Garrett's next question
where are the Burmese Village kids
taught English or Mandarin in school did
they take an interest in monastics in
the same way older Burmese villagers
would what was the most common blessing
requested so I guess this is three
questions we're the Burmese Village kids
taught English or Mandarin in school

there were a ton of certain amount of
English no Chinese

so it's it's weird like high school
students in Burma they have to take
certain subjects like chemistry in
English

and most of them don't speak very much
English so they're just memorizing words
like a parrot to repeat on the on the
test paper and it's not a good way of
teaching them but rote memorization is
the main way of learning in Burma like
you go to a monastic school

um and when it's finals week you know
the big test is coming up to see if they
pass to move on to the next grade uh
it's just ear splitting because

everyone's just repeating their lessons
over and over again out loud
because they're just trying to memorize
the words
and it's like that in a lot of the the
secular schools too and a lot of it's in
English and they don't even fully
understand what it is that they're
repeating they're just like like parrots
but I've never heard of anyone any kids
having to learn Chinese in Burma I think
it's just a relic of or partly you know
English is like the world language for
with regard to science or something so
science is taught in English which is is
not a good idea

so let's see did they take an interest
in monastics in the same way older
Burmese villagers what well they didn't
have the maturity

um pretty much every Burmese boy who is
Buddhist or his family is Buddhist is
ordained as a novice and lives at a
monastery for at least a few days

so but because they're kids they don't
have the maturity of the the older
people you know they're not as

interested in dhamma as a general rule
and then uh what's what was the most
common blessing required is is like
mitas

which is like you know please send metal
you know just which is just another way

of giving blessings or or uh
two people on it just give blessings I
mean that's really the main one or they
want meta yeah I think I said it wrong
the first time but it's
is another one or a Superbowl and those
are the two main requests for blessings
is please send Mata and sue paper on is
just please give us your blessings you
know they weren't asking for anything in
particular they're just taking whatever
they can get and or there's they're just
going for the scatter shot total
blessing
so
yeah I don't speak Burmese very much my

Burmese is getting pretty Rusty now

I'm sure it wouldn't take very long for

me to get it back again but I'm not

really planning on ever going back to

Burma

so

yeah and if he wants to know what is the

most common specific blessing it'd

probably be some kind of Health thing

you know please help my my high blood

pressure or something

so I'll just move on to the or or like a

kid passing please bless my son so he'll

pass his exams that's another one

so I'll just move on the next question

here this is from Sears s-j-o-r-s

it's yours

and he says I'd like to hear your thoughts on what I call karmic occasionalism since everything in this I'm sorry world including including causation is merely relatively true isn't it possible that what we call laws of physics is merely Karma playing itself out saying Newton is hit by an apple while sitting under a tree we theorize that there's something called gravity classic Quantum or other it doesn't matter that made the apple fall and hit his head when in reality it was Newton's and other possible observers Karma that made it happen and so-called gravity and other laws are merely

fictional in this case we would have a kind of karmic occasionalism for context occasionalism is the doctrine that God is the only true cause what appear to be causes in the natural world a lightning strike that sets off a forest fire for example are only occasions for God to act

such natural events are merely correlated not causally connected except now take the above and substitute karma for God well to say that karma is what's causing everything in a sense it's true but there's something that you can say is the cause of karma itself and that's dependent called Rising

so

um the Buddhist Theory of Everything
isn't really about Karma so much as
about the conditionality of everything
dependent co-arising how nothing has an
inherent self Essence and so all these
other causes that also don't have
inherent self Essences are just they're
mutually conditioning each other to
cause this world to seem to exist in
reality

so

um

yeah and I would say there's just an
infinite every every possibility is is
there
and it's it's dependently called Rising

just depending on whatever

huh how do you even talking about this
stuff

how do you even talk about it especially
when I'm getting a horse from from

Talking straight for over two and a half
hours here

so let's see

yeah I would say that the karma itself
is itself the result of dependent color

Rising which is the Buddhist t-o-e the
Buddhist toe Theory of Everything

so but then you can see that Karma which
is Will and then you're back to we're

back to schopenhauer again you know

we're schopenhauer is saying you know

will is is what is creating the world as

will and representation you know that's
samsara as chidina and sannya but all
about it she did not understand y'all
are creating

um creating this some sortic universe
that's all dependent called Rising it's
just

these I mean it's so it's so weird to
try and explain how things that aren't
real condition something else that isn't
real and you've got this whole web of
conditions making the whole thing seem
real

so it's I'm confusing myself so I'm
gonna move on to the next question which
is the last question

the less it always takes me by surprise
it's like boom all of a sudden I'm at
the bottom

and I mean at the bottom of this list of
questions I mean not like the bottom of
something else

so this is the last question this is
from Joe Doe and Joe Doe says where'd
you get your water when you lived in
those caves well it depends on what
caves I lived in

um

see like if I lived in a artificial cave
out of Monastery like the first cave I
lived in for any significant amount of
time was called Mandalay goo or Mandalay
cave at

pampua and it was an artificial cave
that was just dug into the side of a
hill

and places like that there was the
monastery well so I would just go to the
monastery well and fill my bucket of
water or fill my clay pot of water and
then just go back to my cave with it but
other places I mean there'd be different
ways of getting water if I was like out
in the woods like the the big
overhanging rock ledge that I that I
lived under at uh the northern boundary
of Alando casaba National Park in Upper
Burma
um there was a creek

and I would just go down and I have my water filter which is just a like a piece of cloth like a cone-shaped piece of cloth with like a little ring that held the cone open and I would just pour it into my little water bottles the the creek water and the creek water was kind of a greenish color and tasted like milk I don't know why it tasted like milk but it did and I didn't have any problems with it so unless once if it rained hard like when the monsoon hit then it would just be mud it would just be brown and you couldn't drink it then because then you'd get diarrhea but then I mean this is good survival on survival training

here this I'm throwing a little survival training that uh if you want my relatively pure water and it's you've got like a creek or a river or something there and you don't trust the creek water or the river water because it's it's dirty you know it's all brown or something what you do is you find a Sandy place next to the water and you just keep scooping you scoop all the sand out so you've got like this this big Basin and it's going to be dirty water at first and you just keep bailing it out and bailing it out and bailing it out until the sand all around this this basin this this hole you've scooped out

in the sand is serving as a filter and
it eventually starts coming out clear
and then you can drink that and you
won't get diarrhea I mean if there's
like toxic waste from a factory or
radiation or something it might not help
you but

um just like standard dirty water
infested with bugs or something then
yeah you just dig a hole in the sand you
can just use your hands and then just
keep scooping it out like use a little
bowl or something just keep baling it
out until the water is clear and then
you can drink that and that's good clear
water

and then just hope that some Dopey frog

doesn't come along and lay eggs in your
in your Basin which happened to me in
more than once

and that's how I got my water I mean you
either got access to a nearby well and
you go there or you just go to the creek
or the river and if the river water
isn't clean then you just scoop out this
Basin next to it in the sand and just
keep letting it fill up and bail it
until it's clean and then you drink that
and that is the last question I am horse
from talking so much

and uh if you got any questions about
Buddhism in general taravana in
particular Buddhist philosophy

meditation

um monasticism Burma me personally

anything that you think I might be able

to answer feel free to ask you're very

welcome to ask questions

and uh that's why I'm here is to attempt

anyway to answer your questions and the

probably the best place to ask them is

in the comments below the video or if

you have access to subscribe star you

can ask there or if you have access to

the Discord server you can ask there and

check out my URL links below and buy one

of my damn books and give it a positive

review if you please I mean especially

if you really honestly think it was a

good book otherwise you'd be lying we

don't want that and be happy

hello and welcome to episode 63 of
question and answer I am your host poo
basa and this is my
beverage and I usually lately anyway
have been doing these every Saturday but
I waited until Sunday this time just
because I have been very busy lately not
only at work but I come home and we're
like moving you know packing stuff up
and getting ready to to move it to
another place and so forth and it wasn't
until last night that I finally got like
a full night
sleep and I mean really it's like being
a lay person is a higher difficulty
setting if you want to navigate samsara

wisely then it's good to learn how to do it in a like a radically simplified environment like the life of of a monk and maybe if you know you've had enough of that you can't get any farther with that then you move on to the higher difficulty

setting I do think that the Hindus may have it wrong where you know they have to live the the worldly leli first and then when they get old then they renounce the world you know it's like the four ashad Damas I think it's called and uh yeah it it tends not to work out so well when you renounce the world and start living like a radically spiritual life after you've already got all these

ingrained habits and so forth
that are hard to
overcome but
anyways better late than never I
guess we don't have like the usual High
number of questions anyway so this one
might actually be less than two hours of
be sitting here talking till I'm
horse so let's just uh commence to to
answering questions here and the first
one is from I want a
payback and this comment was left left
under one of my um readings in archaic
Buddhism
series um studies in archaic Buddhism I
can't remember what the playlist is

called uh with regard to one of the
these really archaic Buddhist texts that
I was
reading and uh I just might as well
answer here because it's a question and
so I want a payback says hello David
poasa thank you for making these ancient
and profound texts accessible to us
would you see a connection between these
teachings on no fixed views or
perceptions and the notion
ofay isay a later development or could
it be traced back to these earliest
texts aan budhha Dasa has interpreted
atay as the final stage of insight where
The Duality subject object falls away
and the mind basically stops seeing

things also the perception process is divorced from proliferation what are your

thoughts well atay Ian technically atay literally means something lot not like not made of thatness the a at the beginning just means not the Tam means that Maya means made of and the da at the end just essentially turns an adjective into a noun so it's like not made of thatness and I do not recall seeing this um I mean it's not in the uh in the ATA waga I'm pretty sure like in the really archaic text I don't remember coming across the term it's an obscure term

that isn't used much in the texts um it has been said that it's it's it's not in the poly text society's uh poly English dictionary it was just so rare of a term I guess that it just was overlooked but uh I mean it it does it is reminiscent of terms that uh were used in RC texts um I'm not exactly sure what the original meaning of not made of thatness was but essentially it would seem to be indicating that you have realized that there is no underlying self Essence to anything I I would guess um so I mean it could be an archaic term that just fell out of favor there were quite a few of those and a

lot of them are indicating Enlightenment
or the enlightened mind

mind that have um some word similar to
in like you know like thus or this or
that even the word dagat just means he
who has become thus who has he who has
become like that because in early texts
um you can't really describe reality
about the the closest you can come and
just say thus or like that or such you
know such

so I mean it does it is reminiscent of
really early text although I cannot
recall a sua in which I've ever seen the
term um so it could just be
originally um you know indicative of

some enlightened

Insight but um it it's hard for me to say I haven't really studied up on it much later here it says aan Buddha Dasa has interpreted atam as the final stage of Insight or The Duality subject object falls away and the mind basically stops seeing things well I mean he may have interpreted that way but Tai aons as a general rule they're they're pretty free in their interpretation of stuff and a lot of the time they diverge radically from terod and Orthodoxy which isn't entirely a bad thing you know they're they're not as scholarly and dogmatic as the Burmese which um I mean one of the implications of that is that so someone

like ajan buddhadasa is teaching more from their own personal experience and then just maybe inaccurately applying poly terms onto their own insights you know because they just don't have the scholarship to to know exactly what the term is supposed to mean but

uh yeah and when he's talking about proliferation here it's papancha is the word papancha which uh yeah it's like diversification it's like dividing up the world into this and that you know [__] from Shinola that kind of a thing uh dual dualism you know the dualistic mind of just separating everything into

one thing and it's opposite you know
just even just figure from ground you
know there's always has to be this
dualism going on in ordinary worldly

Normy

thought so I'm sorry I can't really
answer I want to payback's uh question
here

authoritatively because I've never I
don't recall having come across at maybe
I have but I just don't remember it
clearly enough to really um make uh like
an authoritative kind of answer to this
but it does it it is reminiscent of
early Buddhism and it's probably
referring to you know some enlightened
Insight but I don't think it really fits

into the stages of insight and so forth
um just because early Buddhism wasn't
really into stages you know it was
either you're enlightened or you're not
essentially so we'll just move on to the
next question here this is from the
anti-marxist

league and the anti-marxist league says
how does confession work in Terra how
would a terod and lay person without
regular access to an in-person songa go
about confession well confession is like
an institution in ter aut Buddhism only
for ordained man astics that there's
this ritual that in pretty much all
terab voden countries has just

degenerated into some more or less
meaningless blah blah blah that you say
in order to clear yourself of rules that
you've

broken like uh in in Burmese they just
say venerable you you got the two monks
they squat down one of them they both
have to

uncover let's see this

shoulder and you know one of them is
making the confession the other one's
hearing the confession and the

confessing mon in in in Burmont they
just say venerable sir I've committed
various offenses of various types and
they don't really even say what they did
which isn't much of a confession at all

you just say I did something wrong and then that's it that's that's as far as the confession goes um I mean there's more back and forth and you know the the the monk that's hearing the confession says do you see them you know do you see your offenses as offenses and then the the the confessing monk says yes sir I see them all of this in pull by the way and then then the other monk the hearing monk says in future you should restrain yourself and then the the monk who's making confession usually lying essentially says yes sir very good sir I will restrain myself even though they know they're going to be keep breaking

the same rules over and over again I mean in most cases actually not just uh a few and uh then the hearing monk just says s sadu sadu and and there you go um so I mean in Terra Buddhism the monastics have to make confession like before they do a formal ceremony especially before they hear the ptim Moka recitation every two weeks they have to be like they have to confess all of their offenses and in the original poly the monk who's making confession is supposed to say you know what offense he has committed but um in Burma they don't do that anymore I still did it I was just a weird Foreigner who was like trying to say what category of offense

um in in in

Thailand they're try to be a little
stricter whereas they're just they just
name off every single category of
offense except for paraj I suppose which
is just instant excommunication you
can't even confess that one and be clear
of it and um really they're not
confessing anything either since they'll
leave they'll say that they committed
these offenses even though they didn't
commit them and therefore they don't
really see them cuz there's nothing
there to see so it's it's all just this
meaningless mumbo jumbo kind of a ritual
that um is in my opinion just pretty

much

pointless but um there are cases of lay people making confession in the poly texts and usually they go to a monk and uh they just say for the sake of restraint in future I confess that I did this and then the monk will say very you did did well you know you should restrain yourself don't do that anymore if you know if you can avoid it and then you know they sort of uh come clean I guess it doesn't absolve them of anything like um like in Roman Catholicism where the priest you know forgives you or absolves you of your offenses gives you some you know Hail Marys or something to do little bit of

penance doesn't work that way in terra
it's just for the sake
of helping you to restrain yourself in
future you make the confession and you
may State this resolve to try to do
better in the future and you know that
counts as your confession but if you
don't have a monk to confess to if you
don't have a revered D teacher to
confess to um just any person that you
consider to be wiser than you if you can
find somebody like that or any person
that you consider just to be a good
person you can go to them and make your
confession to them if if there's no
monks to confess to um I suppose you

could um I mean if you're even like in
email communication with a monk you can
confess over email or Skype or whatever
that would work too but it's not really
any kind of requirement in terraa

Buddhism and it's not really a
standardized institution in Terra

Buddhism except for ordained

monastics so I think I'll just move on
to the next question then this is from
Tim the enchanter

and Tim the enchanter says does

attaining Arya level increase your IQ in

Arya level here just means uh being a

Buddhist Saint supposedly having at

least a glimpse of Nirvana or

nibana um so that you're never going to

backslide and and like go to hell or be
be reborn as a ghost or an animal or
anything like that um does attaining
Arya level increase your IQ I'm not sure
I mean it would it would sort of give
you a more balanced calm clear kind of a
mind so that might help you do well on
like cognitive
tests but um I mean it would make you
like mentally healthier you might do
better on something like the Minnesota
multiphasic personality inventory or
something you'd probably be less messed
up in certain kinds of uh psychological
testing but whether it would make you
literally more intelligent

to give you better problem solving
skills I'm not sure exactly I don't know
if anyone has ever tested this and I
don't know how you could even verify
empirically that someone was an ARA or
not but it certainly wouldn't hurt and
um I wouldn't be surprised if you do get
some kind of intelligence boost when you
become when you have your Glimpse you
know your first glimmer of Enlightenment
you know it it
can ground you and it just makes you
maybe a little clearer minded maybe a
lot more clear-minded depending on how
saintly your attainment is or
was but again this is second second
first two questions in a row I'm unable

to give any kind of authoritative answer
I can just give you my best guess so
I'll just move on to Tim the enchanter's
next question and hopefully I'll be able
to answer this one and says is it
advised to avoid stupid people I'm not
going to lie when I read some posts on
the internet I feel probably the same
way Stephen Hawking would feel reading
our posts or discussions about
physics well I can answer this one and
um it's not advised to avoid stupid
people it is advised to avoid foolish
people and there is a difference people
with low IQ are not necessarily fools
and people who are very intelligent can

be like very big

fools so I mean just look at what's the
insanity of Academia nowadays you got
people with phds from Harvard that have
just gone off the deep

end you know calling for the the
eradication of the white race this kind
of
stuff

so yeah it's it's in the mongalo suo it
gives 38 blessings you know 38 the the
greatest you know the greatest benefits
that you can have and the very first one
blessing number one is not associating
with fools and number two is associating
with the wise so I mean stupid people
not so bad I mean I'm not going to call

the founder of the the tradition which I
was ordained stupid but he was just a
simple not he was not scholarly just a
simple Village person

uh he was ordained as a boy as as a
novice and became a monk he was like in
in robes in monastic robes almost his
entire life

and also my teacher I mean he he had
maybe average intelligence
overall and

uh they were

wise um you know to to some degree
saintly especially Tom Pulu who was the
founder of the tradition
he was considered to be fully

enlightened by a lot of people although
I think he uh admitted that he wasn't
fully enlightened privately at least I
mean to to other monks and so for I
think if anyone asked him are you an
arant he would say no I'm pretty sure
although I never met him in person he
died before I became a
monk so yeah simple hearted good people
are not to be avoided you're better off
with simple-hearted good people that
that do not score high on cognitive
tests than you are with like really
intelligent sociopathic
conmen um I mean some of the best people
I've
known uh were like simple-hearted

villagers living in Burma with fourth grade educations and they were you know they weren't rocket surgeons or anything like that but

um I mean it was it depends like if someone is wise regardless of whether they're intelligent intelligent or not they're going to have an uplifting effect on people around

them so yeah so the answer to that is no it is not advised to avoid stupid people just foolish ones and and like bad ones but bad people are always foolish pretty sure so I'll just move on to the next question

here also by Tim the

enchanter and he says Urban terraa
temples look like Catholic cathedrals
with all this gold and money and
blessings Sacred Scriptures statues
paintings and candles I wonder if
Catholic priests and Buddhist monks
invented all this we don't work and you
all work for us and give us your money
system apart from each other or Catholic
Church borrowed it from Buddhism and
some Hinduism what do you
think well

originally Buddhist monks of course they
weren't they weren't wealthy at all I
mean they were just dressed in rags and
slept under trees and just begged for
their food in the

streets and to some degree they're still like

that uh Catholics I assume I mean the early Christians also were very austere and and poverty was a

virtue but uh once a religion becomes mainstream it becomes a popular even like a state religion then it's going to get a lot of support you know and you're going to have monks and Priests who really do not have uh like a genuine vocation you know they're not called to do this for Spiritual purposes they've just getting on the gravy train they want to live an easy life without having to work for a living maybe they're gay

they don't like women and they want a socially acceptable way of not getting married um so I mean that H that's just Universal human phenomenon and I'm sure it would happen under similar circumstances anywhere in the world without uh one system having to borrow it from another system so yeah and in Terra temples Urban terava temples most of them probably don't really look like Catholic Cathedrals my experience is that most terava temples that are in a city or a town in America they're mainly just like a rented house that is like you you don't even notice that it's any kind of Buddhist

organization other than like maybe a little sign in front and then when you go inside there's like a big altar in the living room there and lot of decorations stuff that people have donated candles and Christmas lights around the Buddha statues or whatever um so it's not really austentatious although it may be as ostentatious as the Asian immigrant communities can afford to make it which may not be all that much so yeah it's not just Catholic priests and Buddhist monks I mean you look at like uh Greek Orthodox

Patriarchs and they look kind of like Santa Claus except they're just decked out in like gold and jewels and if you read um the theory of the Leisure Class by thorstein weblin it's one of the only economics books I've ever read he explains why this is the case you it's it's a similar um a similar phenomenon to like the butler of a rich person looking and dressing and acting like he's like a a prime minister of of some country you know he's like dressed out in this tailor made suit and just or or back in the old days they'd be dressed in Livery they you know it'd be like purple velvet with like uh you know gold

buttons going down and stuff and the reason why they do this and they used to do it and they still do it to some degree is like if my servants look like Prime Ministers or they're dressed up in like this purple velvet with gold on it um I mean if my servants are like that how does that you know how does that make the the Master look I mean he it just like uh it's like a a status symbol that makes him look even more exalted because even his servant looks like a prime minister and the some of that has crept into Christianity and other religions where you know it's like Bishops and

Cardinals and popes I mean sometimes they're just Decked Out and you know they just got jewels and like cloth of gold on them and so forth and because they are Servants of God and in a way that sort of exalts God by showing his servants are are dressed like kings and Emperors but Buddhism at least terado Buddhism has largely dodged that although I mean it it creeps in as much as it can but the tradition is such that monks are just supposed to wear simple robes that's all they're allowed to wear and they're supposed to live in poverty not handle money and all that although most of them do especially the ones that were born and raised into

Buddhist

cultures terrible a of Buddhist ones they
uh they generally ignore uh a lot of the
rules just like people born into

Christian cultures like in America

conveniently ignore things like gather

not up your Treasures upon the Earth you

know it's just too inconvenient normies

don't want to do that and when a a

religious or a spiritual system goes

mainstream it's going to be mostly

normies and they're just not ready to

live a radically spiritual life and so

it gets watered down and watered down

and easier and easier until you wind up

with Christianity in the

west so I guess uh that's enough of an answer or semi rant and so I'll just move on to the next question this is from

Austin and Austin says

is Mahayana Buddhism in some aspects a repackaging of Advant particularly Han Buddhism with the notion that all is one and one is all Indra's net and the

Fang's Golden Lion

analogy gosh I've never heard of The Fazang's Golden Lion analogy I don't even know what Fangs

is

Fangs

well um Mahayana Buddhism in some

aspects it's not so much a repackaging

of Advaita because I'm pretty sure
Mahayana came before what is now called
Advaita like um like one of the the
founding fathers of established Advaita
Vedant is Shankara who I think lived in
around the fifth century you know like
five centuries after the birth of M an
but I have read that Shankara was very
much influenced in his writings of uh
his commentaries on the Upanishads by
Mahayana Buddhism which is a kind of
Mahayana Buddhism and I'm sure there was
a lot of like debating back and forth
and exchanging of ideas and
strengthening their position and maybe
borrowing a few things to to help them

strengthen their positions against the criticisms of the other side and so Advait and certain schools of Mahayana Buddhism you know they sort of it was sort of like a parallel Evolution or I mean they were just like exchanging stuff so that there's like elements of Mahayana in Advait and elements of Advait in Mahayana Buddhism and I really don't know much about Han Buddhism and uh Fazang's Golden Lion analogy but there's there's definitely um Mutual exchanges between the two philosophical systems which results in a lot of similarity like the the dharmakaya of Mahayana Buddhism is

really pretty much

indistinguishable as far as I can tell

from Brahman of ADV viant or near Guna

Brahman which means the Ultimate Reality

which has no discernable characteristics

has no discernable qualities which I

mean that's pretty much emptiness isn't

it just like in in in Buddhism you get

shunyata or sunata depending on whether

you uh prefer Sanskrit or

poly

so it's not really a repackaging of ADV

viant it's just that they influenced

each other a lot because they were like

evolving side by side in the same areas

of India and were like bumping up

against each other and debating each other and so on and so forth so I'll just move on to the next question which is from hait Tig

and hey it's TIG says did you ever wear a belt during your time as a forest aesthetic if so was it made of leather or some other more dhic material I think a belt would not only be useful for strength and for stamina but will also look badass on a Buddhist monk OD

dude well as it turns out a belt or a kayab bandana as it is called in poly is one of the eight requisites every month is required to own a belt and if you look into the poly Tex there are two kinds of belts that are

allowable one is Patia which is a strip of cloth and one is sukara which literally means Pig intestine but because pig intestines are twisted what it means is like a twisted rope so you can use a strip of cloth or a rope and every monk is required to have such a belt and it's mainly not I mean it's not for strength or stamina but it's to hold your lower robe up to keep it from falling off when you're in public because your lower robe it's just a rectangle of cloth you wrap it around yourself um a little more securely than you would put a towel around your waist after you get out of the shower but I

mean you kind of fold it up but still
it's not on there really strictly just
one good yank could could pull the thing
off and so it is against the rules for a
monk to enter an inhabited area without
his lower rope secured onto his body
body with this
belt or

candana so there you go that was an easy
one to answer that mean that was an
authoritative objective straightforward
answer so the next question is from seak
andad

zida and it says or rather he
says it says the now that's that's where
I got the it says the first the first
words in in the question are it says the

Buddha didn't want to ordain nuns but in the Pari

mahapa the Buddha says that a datag would not pass from this world until the four-fold sangha was fully established this is the monastic order of monks nuns and the lay men and lay women what do you make of this contradiction if he didn't want to even make the nun order

well not everything in the Maha parasuta is necessarily objective history that there's a lot of Miracle stories and so forth and just it's just to be expected that a lot of Legends and mythology would get mixed in to one of the most

important events in the Buddhist life
which was the end of his life and his
entry into

Parana um

so when he says that a to tagata would
not pass from this world into the
fourfold S was fully established um yeah
I'm I'm really not sure um this is we're
getting away from objective uh
straightforward answers here that it is
true that the Buddha was very reluctant
according to the texts that he was very
reluctant to ordain nuns saying that um
you know that by ordaining nuns he was
reducing the lifespan of Buddhism In
This World by half he thought it was a
bad idea but he was talked into it by

his cousin

Ananda um and Ananda just in the text
you know he just always has like a soft
spot in his heart for women not that
he's ACH or anything but he just
sympathizes with women you know wants
what's what's good for the women
um so he talked the Buddha into it and
then the Buddha's like well all right
now you've done
it but uh and then at the end when the
Buddha is not going to pass from this
world until the fourfold sa is fully
established um yeah I'm I'm not so sure
about about
that uh it's possible you know I mean

there's no way to prove this stuff I mean it's it's just you just make your best guess that's all anybody can do is make their best guess with regard to something like this where there just is no proof one way or the other you know you got words in books that that are like ancient words in ancient books but still they don't go all the way back to the time that they're describing and uh so I mean maybe the Buddha just kind of changed his mind and just accepted that since they're ordained that that's the way it is and uh when he's saying that aaga would not pass from this world then he's referring to previous Buddhas also and the

indication would be that you know even all the Buddhas of the past would have to ordain nuns and I'm not sure if that's the case but I mean pre Buddha's previous to our our Goa Buddha our mythological anyway they existed you know literally millions of years ago at least hundreds of thousands of years ago so I mean you just have to make your own

guess but um it is true the Maha parasuta does contain a certain amount of Mythology and Miracle stories and so forth so

that it's it's hard to say I mean even even the part where the Buddha does not

want to or ordain nuns it's I mean you
can you can see in the text if you read
about nuns and so forth in the poly text
you can see that there was OB it was
obviously a contentious controversial
issue in the first hundred years of
Buddhism just as it is in the most
recent 100 Years of Buddhism especially
the most recent few
decades so I mean it's pretty clear that
a lot of monks in early times just
didn't like the idea of nuns being
ordained some of them did some of them
didn't and it's it's the same
nowadays so it's hard to
say what parts with regard to you know
being pro-one and anti-un in the polyx

what parts of those are just like
propaganda that was added by some
faction that was either very much in
favor of the ordination of nuns or very
much not in favor of the ordination of
nuns and I think probably both both
sides are represented to some degree in
various

texts so that's really all I can all I
can say with the regard to that one so I
think I'll just move on to the next
question here this is from Alex and when
Alex was responding to the question
above that I just attempted to answer
and he says to add to this question how
do we see the Buddha's words quote

Ananda if females had not gained the going forth from the lay life to homelessness in the teaching and training proclaimed by the realized one the spiritual life would have lasted long the true teaching would have remained for a thousand years but since they have gained the going forth now the spiritual life will not last long the true teaching will remain only 500 years unquote and he uh he he gets this from the angur Naya 851 but it's also in in ninia with regard to the origins of the bikuni order leading up to the rules for the beunis anyway Alex continues here he explicitly says that the true

teaching will remain only for 500 years
so it's not present for 2,000 years now
neither in terava nor Mahayana also why
does the ordination of nuns bear such
grave consequences in my experiences in
my experience in all religions nuns are
very de devoted even
fanatical so I guess that's an extra
question at the end so I'm going to have
to make a separation
here
okay I think I did it oh wait I gotta do
it
again all
right so the first question first and
I've written an entire article on this

that's in one of my books probably
studies in studies in terab Buddhism or
essays in terava
Buddhism first book that I published on
Amazon it's probably in the links below
if you look down there you you'll get
like the full essay on this very subject
with a few follow-up subject or
follow-up essays
too but so the Buddha says according to
the texts that because of ordaining nuns
Buddhism would only last for 500 years
so there are various ways of
interpreting this first you could
say the Buddha just didn't say it then
it just got added and for most devout
Asian Buddhists that's just a

non-starter you can't say that you know
it's just it just got added in there
it's just this false [—] that got
added into the Sacred
Scriptures

so there's that I mean some open-minded
Western Buddhists might adopt that route
and I'm I consider that a possibility
maybe it just the Buddha just never said
this that that Buddhism would only last
for 500 years because of the ordination
of

bonis another option is the Buddha did
say it but he was wrong and that's even
more more of a non-starter for Buddhist
I mean nobody's going to no no devout

Buddhist is going to say that the Buddha could just be wrong with regard to something like this there even fewer people would choose two over one okay another one is see the Buddha did say

it and uh it was true and that's that's kind of that's an intriguing one I think maybe you know it's possible he he did say that Buddhism would only last 500 years and what we've been practicing all this time just isn't really the true dhama it's not really the true teaching anymore and so that's that's a possibility um I mean the commentarial answer is I should have said that one first according to the commentaries when

the Buddhist said that Buddhism would only last for 500 years or the true teaching would last for only 500 years what he meant to say was that it would last for 5,000 years but why the Buddha would say 500 when he meant 5,000 I mean that's that's just ridiculous that's just pathetic because I mean the commentators really didn't have any choice I mean they were like backed up against the wall on this one because um like Buddha Gosa was writing his commentaries approximately a thousand years after the time of the Buddha so I mean Buddhism wouldn't even exist anymore if that was literally strictly

true so I mean he's got to come up with something he can't say that the Buddha never said that that it's wrong can't say that the Buddha was wrong so I mean he had to just I mean it's sort of like it happens in politics nowadays you know where you know you got the the the democrat congress person pulling a fire alarm to stop a vote and then he's saying oh I just thought it was the door you know I thought I was just opening the door and and it's it's a lame argument but people with a vested interest in supporting his party or his side will say yeah well there you go he just explained find it and that's kind of the way it is with with this uh

commentarial approach um I have come across a few other possibilities one is by Paul low who is not a Buddhist but he is a wise person in my opinion and he was saying that what what it meant was that for 500 years you had an unbroken lineage of enlightened teachers and disciples you know you just have you know an enlightened Buddhism going for 500 years and then after 500 years it it just died out you know you finally had an enlightened teacher who didn't have any enlightened disciples which broke the lineage but there have been times since then when Enlightenment has reisen there's been sort of a a Renaissance of

Enlightenment in Buddhism possibly like
medieval China even which was Mahayana
like Chan

Buddhism um so that's a possibility also
I had one Burmese Monk um not really so
long ago it was like the last time I was
in Burma I'm pretty sure back when I was
still a monk say that you know he meant
it figuratively you know that instead of
a Thousand Years it'll last 500 just
means you know it'll last half as long
and the numbers were just sort of like
for example kind of a thing but
personally I'm intrigued by the the
possibility that what he said was
literally true and that what we've got
going now really isn't the true

teachings anymore even though it's possible still to become enlightened you know it's not like nobody has become enlightened in the past 2,000 years following Buddhism but it's just they're doing it in spite of the fact that the teachings are so corrupted that they don't really represent you know the original teachings anymore or the other possibility which I think is probably more likely just going with aam's Razer is that since the the entire polytoptica is not entirely reliable as just accurate verbatim teachings of the Buddha that uh it might have gotten added in like I was just talking about

how there it was a contentious issue
even in ancient times so it may be the
anti-ordination for bikuni faction just
got this added into the text somehow
because they just you know they can't
really stop the nuns from existing
anymore because it's like a done deal
but um you know they wanted to point out
that it wasn't a good idea and they're
not favor of it and so they tried to
make it out like the Buddha wasn't in
favor of it so that's a possibility
too but if you want like my full
coherent discussion of this you probably
have to look um in the book on uh I
don't even remember the name of the the
name of the uh the article or the essay

it was like the 500 year lifespan of Buddhism something like that but it is interesting uh I interesting topic of discussion I have to admit because you've got the text saying an ancient text in which the Buddha is saying that even setting aside beunis that the Buddha is saying that Buddhism will exist for only 500 years and it just does kind of indicate the humility of early monks that they just didn't realize what traction Buddhism was going to get and how it was just going to take off and become a world religion so and then the second part of this question

here by

Alex is why does the ordination of nuns bear such grave consequences in my experien is in all religions nuns are very devoted even fanatical the main problem is just celibate sexually frustrated men and celibate sexually frustrated women interacting with each other it just causes problems it's not anything negative about women the Buddha had to admit when Ananda was pestering women are just as able to become enlightened as men are and that was like his foot in the door and that finally changed the Buddha's mind but um you know so women

are just as able to become enlightened
as men or approximately as able of
becoming

enlightened women can become fully

enlightened it's not just a men do not
have a monopoly on

enlightenment but it's it's just men and

women who are um celibate and many of

them are sexually frustrated I mean it

[__] happens I mean it happen it's

happened in the aan cha tradition not

with fully ordained nuns but the

unordained kind where Just One Fine Day

a monk and one of the unordained nuns

just runs off and live happily ever

after

somewhere it does

happen so I think that was the main

reason he didn't want nuns and some of

the ancient Indian athetic sects did not

allow the ordination of female monastics

so I'll just move on to the next

question here this is uh this is from

ruie and ruie says hello poo a simple

question this time what are your

thoughts on luck it seems like a special

kind of karma yeah well um in in

Buddhism Buddhist philosophy there is no

luck it would all be some kind of Karma

and so it may be that a person just has

like a a strain of Good Karma that just

helps them win at cards or something you

know they just they just have good luck

not necessarily at casinos but I mean if
you win or lose in a casino I mean
that's Karma you know anything that
happens to you is the fruition of karma
according to Buddhist philosophy at
least according to terraa Buddhist
philosophy

so yeah I mean in in Burmese
can I mean it's uh it literally means
Karma but it also means luck like k k it
means good karma or good luck you know
if you're lucky you you just say k you
have good karma so yeah it's it's not
really a special kind of karma it's just
sort of like a positive strain positive
strand in your in your karmic

stream that uh causes good things to
happen to

you rather than bad things so I think
I'll just move on to ru's next question
here well a less simple question to
after all

is it worth it is it worth it trying to
reconcile terava and Mahayana and I'm
not exactly sure what he means by
reconciling them I mean to have them dis
agree to disagree on friendly terms you
know have them you know cooperate on
certain things that's that's fine that's
that's ideal like the the University of
Nanda in Ancient India you had all these
different sects of Buddhism living in
the same Monastery compound you know

they each had their own separate SEMA or
like ecclesiastical boundary they do
their own uh like formal ceremonies
separately just so that be in accordance
with their own rules of monastic
discipline but I mean they were living
peaceably together it wasn't it wasn't
like early sects of Christianity trying
to obliterate each
other and so I mean that kind of
reconciling where they're just
reconciled to each other's existence I
mean that's just common sense but
reconciling the philosophy
um no I mean you can't really reconcile
I mean sometimes it's just opposites

like in some respects Mahayana teaches
the opposite of terava like terava says
you know according to goab Buddha you
should try to become enlightened In This
Very life if you possibly can Mahayana
says no don't do that postpone it
indefinitely until all other beings in
the universe are also enlightened which
just means means you're postponing
Enlightenment pretty much
forever so I mean those obviously can't
be reconciled be you know get yourself
enlightened In This Very life or the
Mahayana Buddhist are saying you know
that's just an inferior point of view
that's just selfish and and it's the
deficient vehicle it's the inferior

vehicle H Yana and you know you should
just postpone Enlightenment forever
that's somehow
better so I mean you can't reconcile
some of the philosophical aspects of the
two but uh I mean just getting along
with each other and agreeing to disagree
that's that's the kind of reconciliation
that uh has been practiced fairly well
and uh despite kind of Jabs at each
other every now and then especially the
H Yana thing the slur of
hinana um so yeah I think I'll just move
on the next question now and this is
from keep the
vinia and keep the vinia says suppose

you had never become a monk but remained
a Buddhist Layman do you think you would
have had children I asked because
children are one of the greatest
attachments well when I was a young
man I used to think about this kind of
stuff

myself and I mean I didn't want children
myself because you know back in those
days I mean nobody gave a [__] about
global warming or climate change I mean
that was not the issue it's like you
know all these higher ups like the
globalists you know they they were
having us be afraid of nuclear war
nuclear Armageddon and nuclear winter
maybe a little bit of fear about

pollution and and
overpopulation but really the the the
really fanatical protesters and so forth
they were against nukes and now it's
against global warming and the nukes are
at least as dangerous as they were
before you know now you've got North
Korea with nukes and Iran's getting
nukes and Pakistan's got nukes and you
know third world countries essentially
are getting nukes and so in that sense
it's more dangerous now probably easier
for terrorists to get a hold of a
nuke but for some reason nobody cares
anymore it's like they're all freaked
out about global warming because that's

what they are told to be freaked out
about they they're like
sheep

so I was I was concerned about what the
world was going to become I mean it's
like you don't want to bring a a child
into a world that's just going to become
a some sort of apocalyptic Wasteland or
some such and I knew that that having
babies was just a is just in some ways
it's an awful thing although you're all
doped up on Parenthood hormones and so
forth that you know you kind of got this
Euphoria getting you through it but I
remember when I was like a junior monk
I'd just be walking through some burmes
Village going for alms with my alms Bowl

in my hands and just hear some crying
baby and those were the times when I was
happiest that I was a monk cuz I just do
not like the sound of of screaming
babies just I mean once you if you
become a monk or become a parent then of
course you know you got the Parenthood
instincts and the hormones keeping you
going and everything and you just kind
of get numb to it or something just get
used to

it but the thing is when I was a young
man and wasn't a monk yet and still
somewhat open-minded on just settling
down with the the right girl if I found
her which I hadn't found yet at the time

um it would depend a lot on her I think
it would just be selfish um just to
refuse to have kids if she really wanted
to have kids I think like motherhood
instincts are strong in some women where
they just feel like they can't be
fulfilled in life unless they have
children you know some women they they
really want to have children and so I
mean maybe out of love for my wife I'd
be willing to have one or two most you
know I used to remember just two would
be the
limit

so yeah it's probably just as well that
I didn't have any kids in this life I'm
pretty sure I I don't I don't have any

uh

Offspring you know out there

somewhere never heard of any anyway

never heard of an ex-girlfriend being

pregnant after we broke up anything like

that so yeah I

mean whether I actually would have had

children or not like the main girlfriend

that I had before I was a monk like the

last girlfriend I had I think she was

incapable of having children anyway so

there's a good chance I wouldn't have

had children if I had just not been

ordained and and settled down with with

my girlfriend at the time um gotten

married there's a good chance we just

naturally would not have had children or
then again maybe she'd want like a test
Tu baby or something I don't
know but uh yeah it's possible but would
have depended on the woman I was with so
I'll just move on to keep theia's next
question who says how do those who say
that Buddha meant right View and not no
view defend their position well that's I
mean the word d means View and it also
in later texts means wrong view you know
just D view has come to be synonymous
almost with wrong
view but
in the the earliest strata of Buddhism
the Buddha was just saying you shouldn't
have any view you you should not have

any belief you know you should not cling
to any

perception anything like that that I
mean it's just in the scene only the
scene you just do not philosophize you
do not come up with interpretations of
samsar which is samsara itself it's like
samsara is perception samsara is
meaning

so but I mean that was so profound and
it was just it was like emptiness I mean
it was like there's no ground for you to
stand on and so after Buddhism started
becoming more popular you have more
scholarly people and less like radically
spiritual people entering the S they're

you know they want something
philosophical that you can believe in
and they establish this elaborate
Scholastic philosophy and you can't have
no view because then you elaborate
Scholastic philosophy would be rejected
and so they came up with a distinction
between wrong View and Right View and I
mean to some degree I mean even like the
first step on the noble Eightfold Path
is Right View but that's sort of a
makeshift I mean it's not ultimately
true it's just sort of a skillful means
you know it's an expedient to make you
help you get progress towards less and
less
view So eventually

I mean the Buddha LED this led his followers to a Cliff's Edge and then he dived off and some of his more advanced philosophers dive his Advanced disciples dived off with him but then after he he left the scene and as I say Buddhism started becoming more popular and then it started becoming more philosophical and so forth then you have the philosophers justifying backing away from the cliff and then you have more emphasis on right belief instead of um just no belief at all and so it's it's right there in the text like the later later strata of the poly text are going to have a lot of emphasis on believing

you know the true teaching which is you
know like a philosophical
system and uh there are very few
Buddhists nowadays who really think that
you shouldn't have any view at all even
though Thea waga that's pretty much the
main teaching of
it so

so how do they how do they defend their
position is it's right there in the text
they don't discriminate between archaic
and later texts and if you read the
commentaries to the ateka waga where
it's saying no view that the commentary
says when the Buddha says you shouldn't
have any view what he means is you
shouldn't have any wrong

view so DT just came to mean MAA DT
which is you know view just came to be
synonymous with the wrong view so that
you could have the right view of
orthodox Terra A0
philosophy which is I guess unfortunate
but it's just the way it
is so I'm just move moving on to the
next question from Kei the vinia
here and Keith the vinia says are
feelings of nihilism and and
misanthropy a good motivation for
becoming a monk when I have these
feelings my urge to renounce the world
is
strongest I think it was possibly the

the most recent like previous Q&A I was talking about how um according to the wiui MAA there are six personality types looba Dosa mooha and their opposites and it does say that people with the Dosa temperament the the temperament of hate or just sort of uh what is it aversion that they actually have an advantage in dama because they because they have aversion for the world and aversion for other people and so forth it's easier for them to renounce the world and renounce Family Ties and friendships and so forth and just go alone like the Horn of the rhinoceros so there is that also this

question reminds me of a a quote in GC
P's book studies in the origins of
Buddhism which by mere coincidence I
have right

here and this also by mere coincidence I
have this book bookmark right

here I do have it outlined and starred
because I I really like this quote
because there is a lot of truth to
this he

says the adoption of the aesthetic idea
requires a firm faith in spiritual
happiness and as firm a despair of
material life its wide prevalence in a
society Bes speaks not only the
acuteness of its religious Consciousness

but also considerable social distress in
practice the ranks of the mendicants are
filled not only by Ardent religious
Souls but in the main by Those whom
despair of Material life has driven
into vagrant

beggy

amen

so feelings of nihilism and misanthropy
I mean yeah I mean it's it's not you're
not going to stay there but it's sort of
a good start and then it leads you to
something better I mean misanthropy is
like dislike for for the human
race um but I mean if at first it helps
you to renounce the world and you go off
and live alone and then after you've

you've lived alone and have been trying
to live up to this exalted ideal trying
to become a saint and so forth and
seeing

that I mean it's easier said than done
then you start having more compassion
for the [__] up masses out there and I
mean that happened to me I used to have
a lot of disdain to put it mildly for
the human race in general I just did not
like the human race I prefer trees to
humans but I mean after you go out and
live among the trees and you're
trying to become like an enlightened
Saint and I mean you're just like
battling against human nature you're

battling against you know yourself so to
speak and and me just it's easier said
than done it just doesn't work out the
way you think it's going to work out so
that when you interact with people again
I mean you have a certain sympathy with
the fact that they're [_] up
too I mean we're just stuck being human
we don't have any choice but being a
kind of upgraded
ape so yeah I think feelings of nihilism
and misanthropy can be an adequate you
know a sufficient motivation for
becoming a monk I mean there has to be
more to it than that I mean your only
reason for becoming a monk is because
you you hate people and have no ideals

or anything um you know you don't can't believe in anything I mean that's not going to get you very far I mean like like Pond was saying there also has to be a certain deep faith in in like spirituality in general like the idea of Enlightenment the idea of wisdom the idea of like some Ultimate Reality that you can ultimately come to realize and then then feelings of nihilism and misanthropy can sort of be like helpful in helping you to to get on that path but then eventually you're going to have to let them go but it's it's certainly easier to

renounce the world and become a monk
with feelings of nihilism and
misanthropy than with feelings of you
know strong family sentiment and just
being socially engaged and so forth I
mean most most people like that they
just couldn't do it even to begin with
they couldn't take the first step
so I'll just move on to keep theia's
next

question which is what was your motive
for adhering so strictly to the vigia
rules even though you are not a strict
follower of terraa in general well there
are a few reasons for that this is a
good question there are a few reasons
for that first of all when I was uh when

I first became a monk I just I mean
nobody forced me to become a monk nobody
forced me to join the S and so I just
didn't want to break the rules I just
wanted to be a conscientious Monk and
not break the rules I didn't realize at
the time there were about you know
between two and 3,000 rules that I would
have to study and really I mean when
there's so many rules and it's so easy
to break rules I mean you've got to be
like really careful and just almost
obsessed at first which is what happened
to me I just became like a hard-nosed uh
almost a fanatic with regard to
following rules correctly but I just

didn't want to break the rules I wanted
to be an honest conscientious
Monk and it just turned out that in
order to be an honest conscientious monk
you have to be practically an expert on
the rules of monastic discipline cuz
it's so easy to break them so and also I
mean when I first became a monk you know
there's the the Trinity Sila Samar PA
now Sila is morality samadi is like
concentration and Pa is wisdom and my
concentration pretty much sucked my
wisdom didn't satisfy me either
and
so the one thing that I could really
master was CA or or
morality and

so I figured you know just do what I can
and then the CA and the somat or the
samat and the PA you know they'll
they'll come later once I get the the
morality down then it makes the samama
easier which makes the wisdom
easier so that was also part of the the
reason for it but uh I mean if you're
going to join join an organization and
they've got these rules I mean nobody's
forcing you to to join the
organization but I mean it's just just
seems dishonest to me to join the
organization and then just not follow
the rules even if everyone around you is
not following them I mean that's that's

on them but if you're not following them
that's on

you and I just didn't become a monk
because I just wanted to follow along
with what everybody else was doing I
mean that obviously wasn't going to work
so I figured if it ever became became
too difficult to follow the rules
anymore it just wasn't convenient to
follow the rules anymore I would drop
out of the monk hood and that's
essentially what happen in the west you
know you're living among you have fewer
options you have no choice but to live
in situations where um you just can't
follow the rules easily if if at all I
mean even to set foot on most Monastery

property is against the rules
technically because for one monk to make
use of something that another Monk has
paid for with money that's against the
rules too I mean it goes so far that
there's a story in the commentaries
about a monk a Shameless unconscientious
monk buys a mango with his own money and
he he eats the mango and throws the pit
aside and that pit germinates and
Sprouts into a mango tree a 100 years
later another Monk sits in the shade of
that mango tree he's breaking a rule of
monastic discipline by making use of
something that another Monk paid for
with his own money I mean it's that

strict and it's when you're in in Asia
you can avoid breaking rules like that
by just avoiding monasteries you know
just go out and live in the forest which
is what I did most of the time but in
the west it's just not an option you're
just breaking rules whether you want to
or

not and uh yeah it just it's not it's
not a good way of of being a monk I
think anyone who's going to be a monk
should uh find a really strict place in
the west which would probably be run by
Western monks who tend to be stricter
than Asian monks or just go to Asia and
just avoid monasteries
altogether so let's see here did I

answer this question my motive for ad
hearing so strictly yeah mainly nobody
was forcing me to become a monk and I
wanted to be a conscientious honest Monk
and that meant just not shamelessly
breaking the rules and then when you
make confession you're lying by saying
that you're going to restrain yourself
in future when you know you're not I
mean it just it just makes things worse
and

also um following rules is about the
only thing I could really do well when I
was a junior monk especially I mean that
I was no meditation Master at the time
and so I mean follow the

rules so I'll just move on to the next question this is from White Ash Piper and white Dash Piper says I've been thinking on nde phenomenon near-death experience phenomenon and I've and I've come to the conclusion that it's an idiosyncratic one but I can't help to wonder if this isn't a phantom

Consciousness happening similar to an amputee where they can still feel the missing limb maybe our brain has that very same response in death you being a biologist might have an interesting point of view thanks Big

Um that's a weird one I've never I've never considered that before that a near-death experience is it's not so

much a phantom limb but an entire

Phantom body and if I mean if you're

completely unconscious I mean in some

ways it'd be a phantom brain

too um yeah

I I kind of I kind of have my skeptical

doubts on that one um

yeah it could I mean from a Buddhist

point of view it'd be more of just the

stream of of karma you the stream of of

conscious will it

continues wow a little animal just ran

by that's

weird wonder what kind of little animal

it was

anyway I mean it just continues after

the body ceases it's you know Buddhism
is not like a purely materialistic
philosophy where you're dead you're dead
you know it's just that's it you
just I mean if that were the case then I
mean Buddhist any Buddhist that doesn't
believe in any kind of afterlife would I
mean if he believes in the four noble
truths and if he doesn't believe even in
the fourth truth then why the hell is he
a Buddhist but if you do believe that to
exist is to suffer and you don't believe
in any kind of afterlife then why not
just commit suicide now not that I'm
encouraging anyone to commit
suicide
because if you commit suicide and you're

not enlightened yet you're just going to
get born again whether you think you are
or

not

so yeah I think it's probably like

you're entering a kind of surreal dream

state although um I mean like the

Tibetan Book of the Dead goes into great

detail on what would be called the

near-death experience except this is the

afterdeath experience but a lot of

similarities you know you're like going

into the the bright light and so forth

um but you're supposed to remind

yourself according to the Tibetan Book

of the Dead that this is all just it's

all illusion it's not real you know it's like a it's sort of like a dream but it's apparently some sort of human archetype that people in general have these same experiences or very similar ones uh when when they have like a near-death experience or for all we know after they've really died so

um what causes the near-death experience phenomenon of you know first um you know like the the standard stereotypical case someone gets in a a motorcycle accident or they they almost drown or they're uh under anesthesia on a hospital on a hospital table you know getting operated on the next thing they know they're

floating up and they can look down and see their body down there with maybe people working on them trying to revive them or whatever and then they can they kind look around and then they get higher and higher they can might might be able to see all sorts of things they can see you know dust on top of the lamp you know the ceiling light and so forth um and then eventually they just rise up into the air and there's like this bright light like the herous Bosch painting where you know they're going up in almost like this tunnel and there's this bright light at the end and then they go through that and usually there's

some sort of spirit guide waiting for them um if they're a religious person it may be some well-known religious figure from their own religion possibly Jesus or Mary if they're Catholics um or it could just be a close family member a trusted Mentor from their early days who has already passed on and you know they have to review like their life and so forth and then generally at the end of the towards the end of the near-death experience they're told that it's not time for them to die yet they're going to have to go back or else they get the choice and they choose to go back but I guess if you're really dead then

you don't really get to go back at least
not into the same
body but uh yeah I think my my degree in
biology isn't really helpful with with
regard to understanding near-death
experiences because I don't really
interpret a near-death experience in a
biological way I mean it could be that
it's just some human archetype of a kind
of dream experience that you have when
you just got this last spark of
Consciousness going um but I think it's
probably better explained in
nonbiological terms as just a
continuation of the human spirit for
lack of a better word after the body has

ceased

functioning that you just leave the body and then maybe have to come back if the if the body gets revived or if you know you're told to go back or you choose to go back or whatever so yeah this is I we can chalk this one up to uh just a best guess sort of answer and so I move on to the next one this is from bodhisatta 969 and I forgot to study up for this that's too bad it's too late for me to to read the jasuta and the

majima so anyway bodh 969 says your opinion on this article I have read please is this true and then apparently this is a quote from if not the jasuta then it's it's a some text in which the

Buddha is speaking to the doctor

jivaka and he

says jivaka one day all people will

understand that the beus do not want

animals to be killed when no one will

offer meat to the beus

anymore and the beus will only need

vegetarian dishes to eat

unquote and then uh

the article continues from this

conversation one can conclude that the

consumption of meat is only permitted

under the condition that the G Giver

only offers dishes containing meat

that's not correct if the person who

lives according to the teachings of

Buddha has the choice between vegetarian food and food containing meat he should choose the vegetarian food what is controversial however is why Buddha died at the age of 80 it is often heard that the Buddha died from a poisonous piece of pork but this is a misunderstanding Buddha was given a special dish made from mushrooms picked from the sandal tree called sukra madwa by the lay devote named

Chanda when the Buddha had finished eating he said to Chanda quote dear Chanda please burn the remains of the mushroom dish do not allow anyone to eat it unquote which is

Maharana uh something something the word

the poly word sukur madawa is often translated as meat or or pork the poly word for pork is sukura

mamsa uh Caroline a Davids the r the wife of Reese Davids a noted scholar writes in her work Emanuel of Buddhism quote pork sukar mamsa as part of a meal is actually mentioned once in the scriptures in a remarkably inappropriate verse in which a householder when inviting Buddha to dinner lists an extensive menu in detail nowhere else is madawa ever associated with meat it is a dish made from a root that like truffles is very popular with pigs and may have been called a pig

treat this is from a manual of Buddhism
page 260 from these quotes and
conversations one can conclude that the
Buddha clearly preferred a vegetarian
diet unfortunately not all Buddhists
follow this commandment
commandment and misuse Buddha's words to
justify their meat consumption by
arguing that Buddha allowed meat eating
if the animal was not killed
specifically for them it has been and
shown that this argument is not true in
this way
unquote so I'm supposed to give my take
on this and this it turns out this is
the very last question my golly it's
like I don't realize that it's the last

question until I get to the end of the
the scroll here and it doesn't scroll
down any farther okay so there's a lot
to unpack here and I did not read the
Jiva cuta of the maimin aaya you can
look it up uh yourself but I don't think
it says what this is because because the
sarasti Vada uh Buddhists apparently uh
deleted the
jasuta from their um from their majaya
from from their suap ptica because it
did pretty much endorse the eating of
meat where jivaka the doctor goes to the
Buddha and is saying that non- Buddhist
philosophers are claiming that the
Buddhists endorsed the killing of

animals because they eat meat and the Buddha says no if if a monk sees hears or suspects that the the animal was killed for his sake he's not allowed to eat it otherwise it's fine because essentially they're eating leftovers anyway or at least that's the way it started

off but uh there are a few things I would say here that first of all Caroline Reese Davids I mean the person who is writing the article doesn't even get her name

right um and I mean she was kind of embarrassing and her translations are are so idiosyncratic and so Christian I mean she was not a Buddhist or at

least she she she wasn't entirely a
Buddhist I mean she she was like one of
the early westerners who just started
just bashing the idea that the Buddha
really taught no self because she was so
unobjective I mean she just kind of got
drawn into the poly text translating
Thing by her husband who was much more
accomplished as a poly scholar than she
was U and she's just trying to drag in
her own like more or less Christian
Common Sense views U into Buddhism just
because she cannot accept that a wise
spiritual system would teach something
other than she was willing to believe
apparently um so I mean there is that I

wouldn't I wouldn't trust Carolina a
Davids Caroline Reese Davids um yeah so
anyway and then just translating suas
mushrooms I mean that's this this
article apparently was written by
someone with an ax grind they already
had a bias and they're writing this in
order to present as plausible an
argument as possible for eating meat
being wrong and bad and the Buddha would
never endorse it but they Overlook other
texts for example in the potim Moka
rules one of the oldest strata of any
school of Buddhism
even Mahayana Buddhism in their praim
Moksha there is a rule saying a monk is
not allowed to ask for meat unless he is

sick or unless the person he is asking
has given him permission to ask for
special food and it's not just meat it's
like fish and and like milk and curds is
food that was considered to be like
Choice dainty kind of food like good
food you're not allowed to ask for that
unless you are sick or they have given
you permission beforehand to ask and
that includes meat and it's just right
there on the list meat

MSA also there's the part I can't
remember exactly where it is I think
it's in vinia where dadat you know the
the Buddhist Judas is scariot more or
less um he's trying to reform Buddhism

supposedly you know he's trying to make it stricter because um a lot of the non-Buddhist athetics looked down their noses on Buddhism because Buddhism wasn't as strict red this aestheticism as like The Janes or the aeas you know Buddhists got to wear sandals you know they got to use a walking stick this kind of thing and so they were just called shaven-headed householders by the James and the eicas and anyway um David dat wanted to make things stricter and he had this list of things he wanted to change about Buddhism and one of those things he wanted to change is all monks

have to be vegetarian and the Buddha just said no I mean if a monk wants to be vegetarian he can but it's not required so whoever wrote this article uh either conveniently overlooked these or was just ignorant of other texts that specifically I mean even in in Mahayana text they've got their praim Moka and all the praim mokas have that same rule in there you're not allowed to ask for meat or other dainty foods like fish or like CDs or milk or that kind of a thing saying unless you're sick or unless somebody has given you permission in advance also there's a rule that says a monk is not allowed to

eat raw meat or drink raw blood unless
he is possessed by a
demon and uh I read a a book by Doan who
is like the founder of Soo Zen allegedly
in

Japan who uh there's this scene about
this monk who was eating raw meat and
dogen I think it was dogen himself kind
of looked through crack in the door to
see what he was doing and there was like
a demon on top of his head who was
actually eating the
meat

so yeah sukura really does mean Pig and
madawa means like tenderized or Tender
or po sukura means pig or hog and madaa
does mean like

tenderized so I mean you can say it's
like a dainty tender thing that pigs
like to eat but I mean in a way that's
just

I mean they're starting off with the
idea that eating meat is wrong the
Buddha would never have allowed it and
then they're just coming up with the
most plausible arguments they can come
up with to justify that and apparently
they're they were ignorant of other
texts just specifically saying the
Buddha allowed monks to eat meat and it
wasn't just begrudgingly I mean just no
I mean he just refused to require amongs
to be

vegetarian so I mean of course to the text themselves um I mean some people I I mean I don't consider all the texts to be 100% accurate and reliable but if you start arbitrarily just picking and choosing depending on your own emotional preferences then uh you're just leaving objectivity and the likelihood of being correct

behind

so I would consider this

article somewhat propagandistic you know

they're starting off with the idea

they're probably a vegetarian

themselves they think all Buddhist

should be vegetarians and so they're

trying to present a case in which the

Buddha himself would prefer to be a vegetarian maybe even was because they're denying that he that he ate pork um as his last meal but uh the evidence does indicate otherwise but I mean one of the reasons why monks were allowed to eat meat in ancient times is because I mean they were just eating whatever was put in their and as the saying goes Biggers can't be choosers so that's it I think I've answered all the questions unless I've just scrolled over one which I do occasionally but um yeah I've answered all of them so if you

have any questions that you would like to ask about Buddhism uh meditation monasticism me Burma anything that you think I might be able to answer in an intelligent manner or you just want some sort of intriguing unusual off-the-wall kind of answer then uh feel free to ask in the comments below if you have access to the Discord server you can ask there if you have access to the Subscribe Star channel and you can ask there and take a look at my U what is it URL links I almost said UHF my URL links below take a look at my books like I mentioned uh my in-depth discussion of the Buddhist prophecy that Buddhism will last for only 500 years I'm pretty sure is in the

first book and URL links below um um
essays in Tibetan Buddhism by
me and uh like And subscribe to the
channel if you haven't done so already
and be
happy

hello and welcome to episode 64 of
question and answer I am your host dark
poo basa or at least dark on this side
and bright on the other
side and you may have noticed there's
been some uh slight rearranging in this
room including uh the taking away of at
least one of the lamps that I was using
for lighting the room and that is
because we are going to be moving to a
new house within the matter of a few
weeks and so everything that isn't
necessary including few a few things
that are necessary have been packed away
and they are like in a storage place on
the other side of town where the new

house is is located but we haven't
closed on the new house yet so we have
to wait until the sale closes and then
we move stuff

in and uh also you may have noticed that
I didn't do a Q&A last week breaking
with the new system of one Q&A every
weekend and that is because in addition
to all the the moving and stuff I got
sick like a little over a week ago and
I'm still not fully recovered I'm not
exactly sure what it was it was like
some kind of flu maybe maybe like the a
variety of the Wuhan flu something like
that but right now it's it's uh more
than half gone I mean I'm I'm well on
the road to uh recovery now

and I just feel just sort of like head
pressy

and foggy and slightly icky still but
the show must go on and I'm certainly
not going to skip another week any more
than I can skip another week of cleaning
the pond filter out in the fish pond out
front and so we've got a bunch of
questions to answer and the first
question is from my tra

Buddha and my tra Buddha says what are
your thoughts on New Age cult

and strangely that's that's it just it
seems like a strange question to me

because I've never really come across a
new age cult that I can think of I mean

if I try to think of a new age cult the only one that really comes to mind would be ooso you know like uh the Bugan Raj nich as he used to be called and I mean he was pretty new age I guess I mean technically he would probably be considered more Hindu than than anything else you know giving Sanskrit names to his disciples and so forth but I've met some some new age people who considered themselves to be Hindu but really they were more in New Age so with regard to the cult aspect I really don't have enough experience to to have much of an opinion on them because I've never really had any direct interaction with

new age Cults and even though when I was a kid

like Raj Nish puram was probably less than 100 miles maybe a 100 miles or so from where I lived as a kid and you see them on the news and everything but it was always this very biased like anti Raj Niche propaganda on the news because it was normies that were you know kind of running the news station and I mean and then if you look into it I mean you can't find anything unbiased on on the buwan Raj NES Alias O show um you know it's either very much biased in his favor or very much biased against him and you have to kind of read

both sides and triangulate and I did
write an article or an essay about Raj
just trying to make heads or tails of the
man I read a few of his books also but
uh setting aside the ban Raj NES Alias
oh show um just new age in general I've
had a lot of experience with new age in
general

and um as a young
man I just tended to avoid new age
people as much as possible because they
were

so frustrating to communicate with
because they can believe pretty much
anything you know it's like they're
Faith oriented or something they don't
really need reason much or if they have

any semblance of reason you know it is a
slave to their faith or or something
and so I mean it was just so frustrating
dealing with just very soft-headed
people in my opinion at the time that I
just kind of avoided them as much as
possible but then in
2011 when I made my first serious
attempt to live longterm in America as a
kind of Freer range monk I was like my
first year in America my first several
months anyway I was supported more by
new age people than by people who call
themselves Buddhists I mean the
Buddhists just they're like who is this
guy who does he think he is you know

let's just kind of be polite and just
avoid him was was the approach of a lot
of of the Buddhist Community whereas the
new age people um bless their hearts I
mean they're very open-minded you know
they can believe anything and so that
makes them very open-minded and they're
generous and friendly and so they were
supporting me more than the Buddhists
were my first my for several months in
America and uh so I mean I really think
they have some definite handicaps with
regard to spirituality just mainly based
on they can believe anything like in
Buddhism you got the five indas and two
of them are like PA or Reason and S or
faith and you have to have a balance

between faith and reason if you got too much faith and not enough reason you can believe anything like new age people if you got too much reason and not enough Faith you're gonna just be like a hardened skeptic and no amount of evidence will be sufficient for you to uh make a judgment

um so I was going to say something I was that was leading into the next thing I was going to

say and now I can't remember what it was but

uh New

Age yeah I mean I can they've got their

good points and their bad points which is true of just about anything I mean you're not going to have pure 100% evil in this world as a general rule you're not going to have pure 100% good it all balances out in the long run you know all the pluses and minuses balance out so that the Universe can add up to zero

so yeah I mean one thing about new ages they tend to be just like radically pacifistic you know there I've never come across a warlike new Ager and uh so I mean they're harmless I think that would that would be like one of the main attributes of new age people is they are harmless and I think they

would take pride in being called
harmless oh the thing that I was going
to say and I've written about this in
the past is that new age in in some ways
it seems like a misnomer to me because
in a way it could be they could be
called old age because I get the
impression that new AG people
nowadays um in a lot of ways they
closely resemble like classical pagans
before the Roman Empire converted to
Christianity you know I just all the the
spirits and the influences and the the
vibrations and all that um yeah it just
seems like they're like in in a way
they're like

neopagans but not uh neopagans that are
that call themselves neopagans they're
just sort of like

classical pagans like of of Rome who uh
I mean they just sort of now they're in
the in in the postmodern

West so I guess those are some thoughts
and since we got lots of questions

because I skipped a week I think I'll

move on to the next one this is from CAC
and sead

zida and seac and CI

zida asked these

questions more than two weeks ago go it
was um to a previous Q&A before the the
most recent

one and then he got kicked off of

YouTube probably I think it was for uh like it was in violation of YouTube's policy against violent hate groups or something and probably he just like mentioned one because that's how YouTube swings

nowadays so anyway his questions got deleted when he got kicked off the the platform and so uh he had to ask these questions again so these are old questions and I

mean he probably forgotten all about them and he's just being reminded of them again now it's like oh yeah I asked those questions a long time ago so C COV action CAD zida says I remember you said

you think the three-fold classification
of worldling Arya and arahant is
probably legit So based on this do you
think you are an Arya ha or h on
well um I have pointed out
that there's uh a three-fold system like
usually when you've got like the stages
of Spiritual Development in terava
Buddhism it's like the four stages of s
or or below that you got the putuj the
common worldling you know the
Normie and then you got the the sodana
the sakagami the anagami and the arant
the fully enlightened AR
and um I do not consider that to be
probably the teaching of the Buddha that
that's probably a later a later

development but there is another uh spiritual progression that is mentioned in the text of the putuj the Sea and the AA putuj again being the common worldling the common person the sea is the one in training and that would be someone who has started to wake up but isn't fully awake yet and then the ASA is the one who is no longer in training and that's the fully enlightened being and I think that one may have more legitimacy than the four stages of sainthood simply because another system another spiritual system appears to have come up with the same system independently of the terot

Buddhists and that's the
Catholics that's St John of the Cross
who was a discal
carite um very possibly just completely
independently of Terra Buddhism came up
with the idea that you've got the
beginner the Adept and the perfect the
beginner again is just the worldly
normi the Adept is someone who has
become Adept at what the Catholics call
contemplation or high contemplation
which would be at least second gen by
the Buddhist Reckoning because it's a
kind of contemplative state where you're
no longer thinking your mind is just
silent and clear I mean there's still
going to be like the initial movements

of thoughts but it doesn't get past that and then finally the perfect would be like the enlightened being in terada Buddhism and just it was amazing to me to read that that uh St John of the Cross who is the mystical doctor of the Catholic Church anything he says in the realm of mysticism is official Doctrine de facto of the Catholic church and he's saying there is a stage of of perfection in in Christianity I mean even Jesus denied being good you know somebody calls him good master or good Rabbi or something and Jesus says why do you call me good there's none good except God so he was denying not only being God but

even being

good and then here's St John of the

Cross and Juan De La Cruz in 16th

century Spain who's saying you can

become perfect and he considered his

teacher who was St Teresa of Aila to

have been of the stage of Perfection and

he seems to be implying that he also

because he's speaking with authority I

mean he's he's just saying it's like

this you know this is what you will

experience and so uh there's a good

chance that he himself was a kind of

Catholic

arant which is interesting to me I was

fascinating when I first started reading

this stuff because it was just caught me

by surprise and there's so much of it
that's parallel or you know sort like
parallel

Evolution and just assuming that the
Catholics just borrow these ideas from
the Buddhists like from missionaries who
came back from Sri Lanka or
something

so yeah I would assume there's some kind
of legitimacy to

that I mean it's just it's just like a
hypothesis or a theory just just because
I mean it has arisen independently in
two different places that kind of gives
a little more weight than the four
stages of sainthood that I mean

there's there's sort of like

questionable aspects to that like the
fact that the earliest texts don't ever
mention sakagami that other early texts
use

um like uh anagami and also soap in
non-orthodox with non-orthodox meanings
that kind of a
thing

but um just because I think that may be
a legitimate thing I mean going with St
John cross I never became an Adept to
even much less perfect because I never
completely mastered High contemplation
or going with the Buddhist Reckoning I
never completely mastered Jan especially
like second Janna or above I never fully

mastered it so that I could just just
get into Janna whenever I felt like it
but then again in terv Buddhism it
teaches you don't have to completely
Master Janna even to become fully
enlightened so there's still a certain
amount of ambiguity and uh potential
contentiousness involved in that but
with regard to whether I'm an Arya or
not I've answered that before with the
kind of non-answers just you don't even
think about it I mean if you really are
an Arya you're not going to be thinking
I'm an Arya but if you're thinking I'm
not an Arya you're essentially just
closing and locking the door to the even

even the potential of

that so it's a no- win scenario to make
a call as to whether you're an Arya or
not

and so I don't

bother so I'll just move on to covac and
c z now's next

question and this is a nagar question

and therefore a maama question so I'll

put on The maamaa Fez I need all the
help I can

get see here I've had troubles in the

past by getting the eye not perfectly

centered or any something like that

which can result in blockage to your

higher

chakras

okay so he says in a previous video I asked about nagara saying that the ultimate truth is that there is no ultimate truth you said this is because nibana can't be described but earlier I mentioned that nagar already said emptiness is a higher truth than nibana based on this it seems he would not have been using ultimate truth to mean nibana here what what are your thoughts on this do you have any other ideas what nagar could have meant okay nagar is uh very subtle and uh challenging to discuss at times so let's see Nar said that the the ultimate truth is that there is no ultimate truth and yeah it's like

ultimate truth cannot be expressed in
words I mean you cannot grasp it at all
ultimate truth is

I mean it's essentially void I mean it's
just like off the scale so I mean
there's nothing you can say about it
that is going to be valid

ultimately so it's not just that Nana
can't be described it's just reality
can't be

described so then he says uh thear
already said that emptiness is a higher
truth in theana based on this it seems
it would not have been used he would
have been using

ultimate truth to me nibana here what
are your thoughts on this well I mean

nibana has two meanings or Nirvana for a non-terad like nagar they use nirvana instead of Nana using Sanskrit instead of

poly um there there are two main meanings of Nirvana I mean there's nirvana in the metaphysical sense as just reality but the more common definition of or like meaning of nirvana or n

is in the ethical sense which is blowing out it's it's like it's like something that happens to it's like the attainment of nibana is called nibana it's like the the moment of Enlightenment or the state of being enlightened rather than the

metaphysical state that you're that
you're accessing or that you're seeing
clearly it's just like the ethical state
of reaching the
goal and so in that sense it has a more
limited meaning than just Ultimate
Reality you know that's it's like this
ethical phenomenon you could say this
ethical
state
so that's that's one that's another
reason why you know ultimate reality is
considered to be or like emptiness is
considered to be higher truth than
nibana because nibana is just this one
ethical State whereas um you know
Ultimate Reality you ultimate truth

truth just pervades the entire universe and in a sense nirvana in the metaphysical sense could be said to pervade the entire universe but nibana in the ethical sense you know it only goes on in the mind of an arant or I mean if you can even say that it goes on in a mind I mean it's just off the scale and so it's just a paradoxical state but it's much more limited in its meaning than just reality so I hope I answered that one so I'll just move on to covac and CAD Z's next question

here which is you have said Nara understood dependent origination more

than anyone and let's see tying it to emptiness however the sarasti V sutras have various agamas where it directly Associates emptiness with dependent origination for example in the Su Yuka a 335 it says

quote what is the discourse on emptiness in its ultimate meaning monks when the eye arises there is no place from which it comes when it ceases there is no place to which it goes thus the eye being not real arises having Arisen it ceases completely it is a result of previous action but it has no doer when these Aggregates cease other Aggregates continue with the conception of this transient Dharma it is the same with the

ear nose tongue body and mind there are
exceptions to the transient

Dharma they are exceptions to the
transient

Dharma huh the meaning of transient

Dharma is because this exists that
exists because this arises that arises
thus conditioned by ignorance are
activities conditioned by activities is
consciousness and so on and thus arises
this whole mass of suffering so that's
pich and again when this does not exist
that does not exist when this ceases
that ceases when ignorance ceases
activity cease when activity cease
Consciousness ceases and so on and thus

ceases this whole mass of suffering so that's like the reverse version of of dependent Co rising or P monks this is called the discourse on emptiness in its ultimate meaning unquote based on this and analyzing the language maybe do you think nagar was simply using ideas directly from the sutras since SAS was largest Orthodox school at his time or do you think these passages were added to the sutras later somehow hence their absence in poly sutas well yeah nothing like that is really found in the terraa poly texts so that makes it a little suspect that it could be a later addition also it seems like this Sutra is going against some of

the

official uh positions of sval this is

the first time I've ever read this

passage cuz I haven't read much sarasti

Vada literature other than some of their

Venia I've never really read their their

aamas they you know their

sutras and I think this might be like

recently translated because for a long

time it just wasn't translated into

English but uh the sarasti vodin first

of all they believed like the terab

vadens do that that physical matter is

ultimately real that was their official

Doctrine and in fact they even took it

farther than the terad because the

according to terad Abid dama even though physical matter is ultimately real it it just it's blinking on and off at a rate of like a trillion times a second whereas the sarasti vadens had the idea at least in their official doctrine that there is no blinking on and off there it's like that individual dharmas or individual atoms or like um the the ultimately real particles of mind and matter are Eternal and that it's only the the combinations of them that are impermanent so this suture would seem to go against even the sarasti voden uh official Dogma so there is a good chance

that this is just a later addition to the texts possibly by Mahayana Buddhists trying to retroactively put their own sort of sun Vada into the mouths of the Buddha but who knows I mean it's like like I say this is the first time I've ever come across um sarasti voden sutras essentially teaching like the The Emptiness of Mahayana but um I mean you can find really subtle you know very advanced stuff in in very early texts and it may be that this got just edited out of the the poly literature early on because it was just too radical or something or or viewed as too

radical

so but this this Sutra uh assuming that
it is sarvas Vaden as covac and CAD zida
is saying I mean it's it's in violation
of saden Doctrine also so that would
make it a little more suspect and we're
not discussing maama anymore so I'll
take this

off so yeah I mean just offand if I have
to guess I would guess that that is
probably um Apocrypha that was added to
the SAS vad texts uh possibly after SAS
Vada even became extinct it's hard to
say but it was I I would say I would
guess offand that it is a late addition
to the text because nothing closely
resembling that is found in the poly and

the the Sutra itself is in violation of
basic doctrines of sasti Vada

itself so I think I'll just move on to
covac and sead z now next question here
which is a strange

one and he says how do you overcome an
inferiority complex such as being short
or ugly even though I'm 6'3 I feel like
an absolute genetic dead end because I
get brutally height mogged by the people
around me especially my siblings and
relatives random strangers constantly
ask me why I'm so short compared to them
and I just laugh at off I also see
random videos sometimes of women saying
men under 64 or 65 being worthless and

being dehumanized due to their
unattractiveness it's so bad that I
don't want to go outside and go anymore
due to my inferiority complex and fear
of being height mogged to Oblivion and
he's

6'3 some people have told me stuff like
try being 5'5 you privilege POS and I
rationally know other people have it way
worse than me but it seems impossible to
make the inferiority complex go away
well I mean this isn't so much an
inferiority complex at being short
because you know he's well into the top
2% I mean even in like the Netherlands
which is the tallest country in the
world

still he would be above average in height even there so I'm like elsewhere I advise him just move to Asia because I I'm 6 fo three also approximately more or less and uh yeah I just towered over everyone around me when I was living in Burma and

Indonesia so you you'll be a giant there but that's not really solving the solving the problem here which is a kind of strange inferiority conf Lex cuz he's not the tallest person in the world and really that's what it seems to be it's like he doesn't want to be tall because he's already tall he wants to be taller than everybody or so tall that

you know it's like he rarely meets
anyone taller than him but even if you
do I mean I know what it's like I mean
I'm being 6'3 I'm taller than most other
guys but then every once in a while you
meet a guy who's like six foot n and
he's like towering over the top of me I
got to look up when I'm talking to him
and it it is kind of a weird feeling
it's kind of a humbling
feeling but with regard to how to deal
with

it I mean it's the Buddhist Panacea The
Cure All is just mindfulness just
whenever it arises be mindful of it and
then realize that it's not you you know
it's like if you can observe something

like your hand or your
microphone then you know that's not you
because if you are anything at all
you're the who's doing the observing not
the thing being observed so this
inferiority complex arises You observe
it mindfully it's not you anymore
there's already this philosophical
Detachment you know it works that way
with anger or fear or or worry or
whatever inferiority complexes from
being only
6'3 it works for that
too so when it arises just be mindful of
it which detaches you from it it makes
it stop being you

and then you are depriving it of karmic momentum so that it gradually gets weaker and weaker every time it arises and that's I mean best advice I can give you is just be mindful of it just note it when it arises don't identify with it don't take it too seriously and if you do take it seriously you should be mindful of that too so I'll just move on to covac and CAD Zer has next question

here which is it is often said that everything we experience is a result of karma in Buddhism but in the samudaya 3621 it says quote Master Goa there are some Aesthetics and brahmans who hold such a Doctrine in view as this whatever

a person experiences whether it be
pleasant or painful or neither painful
nor Pleasant all that is caused by what
was done in the past what does Master
Goda say about this some feelings siaka
arise here originating from bile
disorders that some feelings arise here
originating from bile disorders one can
know to oneself and that is considered
to be true in the world now when those
Aesthetics and brahans hold such a
Doctrine in view as this whatever a
person experiences whether it be
pleasant or painful or neither painful
nor Pleasant all that is caused by what
was done in the past they overshoot what

One Knows by oneself and they overshoot
what is considered to be true in the
world therefore I say that this is wrong
on the part of these or those athletics
and Brahmin

some feelings arise from
originating from flesh disorders
originating from wind disorders
originating from imbalance of the three
produced by change of climate produced
by careless Behavior caused by assault
produced as the result of karma that
some feelings arise here produced as a
result of karma one can know for oneself
and that is considered to be true in the
world now when those athletics and Brahmin
hold such a Doctrine in view as this

whatever a person experiences whether it
be pleasant or painful were neither
Pleasant painful nor Pleasant all that
is caused by what was done in the past
they overshoot what One Knows by oneself
and they overshoot what is considered to
be true in the world therefore I say
that this is wrong on the part of those
athetics and brahans what do you make of
this well first of all it seems strange
that like the the galin or the humor
theory of galin has gotten into this
sua it's my understanding that as a
general rule Health disorders in in the
Buddhist time it was like the four
elements you have a an imbalance in

Earth element water element wind element
or Fire Element he's got wind element in
there which would be stuff like
arthritis and stiffness and so forth but
um bile and fleem that's that's right
out of

galin it could be there in the text
though it's been a long time since I
read the

sua but I mean let's say you've
got let's say you've got a pain painful
feeling because you've got a fleem
disorder right well who's to say that
that fleem disorder isn't caused by what
you did in the past that's just I mean
you don't say that it's just pain Just
Happening all by itself just because of

karma in the past the karma from the
past may be causing the Flem

Disorder so and this isn't a very strong
argument that has been either came from
the Buddhist mouth or was put into the
Buddhist

mouth um and it's not necessarily all
karma is things you did in the past
because there's also present Karma that
you're making Karma right now the
fruition is just boom the very next
moment so I guess it was like maybe a
moment

ago

so yeah he's got a list here it's

like vile disorders fleem disorders wind

disorders an imbalance of the three
change of climate careless Behavior
assault and it's like going with Abid
dama philosophy I mean for what that's
worth and in this case I I am inclined
you know provisionally to accept what
what Abid dama says that I
mean there are sutas that say this that
I mean Karma isn't the only thing that
causes Pleasure and Pain but then again
Abid dama and maybe other sutas say you
know everything you experience that's
pleasurable painful or otherwise
anything that you experience is the
fruition of Karma and you know it will
manifest itself as a flim disorder or as
climate change or whatever but still

it's your mind that is creating it I
mean this is assuming that physical
matter is ultimately
real and uh I'm not so sure that the
Buddha would have gone with that because
I mean we are I mean the Buddha woke up
he was he woke up from the dream which
implies that this is a
dream I mean that's not the only
argument I could put forth but still I
mean it's a pretty obvious
one so there's nothing to prevent your
karma
from from like attaining fruition from
manifesting itself as fruition through a
bile disorder through a fleem disorder

or through change of climate or careless
Behavior I mean the careless Behavior
itself is

karma so I mean there's it's not
necessarily in Conflict

here and uh yeah the the argument does
not seem like a very strong one and so
yeah I'm I'm still I'm still sticking by
the karma Theory

here because you can you can dream that
you're having a Fleem disorder but still
the fleem disorder is a creation of your
mind because you are dreaming

it so I'll just move on to the next

question here from caken Z which is you
have said you believe psychic powers are
real before but whenever there are

miracles in the sutas like the Maha suta
you say these parts are mythological why
do you think this especially if anyone
in the world had immense psychic powers
it would be the Buddha and his direct
disciples

well it is true that I think psychic
powers can and do happen in this world
but if you read the Miracles in the
sutas some of them not all of them but
some of the Miracles in the sutas are
just grandiose like in the Maha Su um
when the Buddha declares that he he's
going to die soon there's an earthquake
that I mean it's the whole earth shakes
all the way down to the water on which

it floats and then when he dies also
another

earthquake

and I don't think there ever has been a
complete worldwide earthquake unless
it's like when you know some huge Comet
smacks into the Earth you can feel it
all over the world maybe but um I don't
think that a man in India stating that
he's going to die soon is going to cause
an earthquake all over the
planet or there's another one where the
Buddha is he's old he's sick and he
wants to drink of water so he sends
Anand to go get a drink of water and it
was like 500 Ox carts had just passed
through this River and it's all just

churned up and it's just like liquid mud
so Ananda comes back to the Buddha and
says it's all mud I I mean it's it's
hardly even water is this 500 wagons
have just gone through here the would
just says Get me the water and then
Ananda goes to get the water and it just
miraculously becomes Crystal Clear just
because the Buddha wants to drink from
it and I mean you can say that maybe
that really happened but just going with
aam's razor it seems more likely that
that is just a madeup story that got
added to glorify the
Buddha his his you know superhuman
powers and so forth and I mean there's a

lot of that I mean you like the twin
miracle I mean the Buddha used to warn
monks you know don't I mean it's against
the the rules of monastic discipline to
like do Miracles as magic tricks in
order to impress people and then he did
the twin Miracle which is he he flies up
into the air he levitates in the air and
sprays fire out of one side of his body
and water out of the other side and then
the side switch so that the one side
that was spraying fire is now spraying
water and vice versa and then he
switches again so it's the top half is
spraying water the bottom half is
spraying fire and then he switches that
again and I mean Burmese people devout

Buddhists who were born into a Buddhist culture that's that's what they know they don't have doubts about it you know they'll just assert that as a fact but as a

Westerner I am just skeptical that the Buddha ever did that I mean

subtle psychic powers you know psychic powers that happen spontaneously around wise people or you just look into the mind of another person to see how best to to teach them which is really the only psychic power that is encouraged for monks to practice

then yeah that's that's a far cry from
these really spectacular all inspiring
Miracles that
really I mean it just it's like apples
and oranges like a legitimate psychic
power which can and does happen I I have
no doubt nevertheless that's different
from flying up into the air and spraying
fire and water out of oneself to just
blow away these unbelievers down below
or you know the the the muddy water
turning Crystal Clear just because the
Buddha want to drink from it it maybe it
happened but I'm still skeptical because
it just seems very convenient to just
add glory and Majesty to the Buddha in
this text that's largely a devotional

kind of

text so I think I'll just move on to the
next question this is from the
anti-marxist

league and the anti-marxist league

says could a married person with a

family become an arant and still

maintain the normal routine of family

life that is work a job remain a good

parent and spouse engage in conjugal

intercourse intercourse Etc or must one

do what the Buddha did I am currently

single and I'm indifferent to whether

that changes however if marriage would

be a major impediment to Enlightenment

I'd avoid it all together my only real

goal now is

Enlightenment well if your only real goal is Enlightenment then yeah you probably shouldn't get married I think that it's still theoretically possible to become enlightened as a married man some people allegedly have done it like n narad Maharaj in India he was a lay person ran a little stall selling cigarettes and cough drops and stuff he was married and had kids um other people who are considered to be enlightened still mess around you know like Jay Krishna mury for example um Osho another example but um it's just much less

likely that you'll become enlightened as
a married person otherwise the Buddha
would never have established the S of
renuncian to begin
with you just have so many other like
concerns you know you got to make a
living you got I mean it this working
working for a living and having like
close interpersonal interactions uses up
so much of your attention and your
energy that you have less of it left
over to direct towards serious D
practice so it's still theoretically
possible I won't say that it's
absolutely impossible for a married man
with a job to become enlightened who

knows maybe it happens all the time you
know assuming that Enlightenment even
has any meaning in this world in this
samsaric worldly

context but your odds are increased if
you renounce the world and live a life
of radical

Simplicity and then because you're
living a life of radical Simplicity
you've got way less distractions to
distract you from getting into deep
contemplative states where your odds of
becoming enlightened are much
increased so if your only real goal is
Enlightenment I would not encourage you
to get married and raise a family and
have a

career and car payments and insurance
payments and all the rest of
it so I'll just move on to the
anti-marxist League's next
question could Enlightenment be more
common than is often imagined if nibana
and some s are so different and
Enlightenment so unlike anything in this
world of Sam Sara might it be possible
that many persons from many different
walks of life somehow attaint Iana and
simply finish out the remainder of their
life without doing anything particularly
extraordinary yeah that reminds me of a
saying of ramas that I've said before in
these in these q's and A's um that

there'll be somebody who goes to like
the mountains of Tibet looking for a
guru who can teach them in Enlightenment
you can teach them the secrets of the
universe when the whole time their Aunt
Martha back in Massachusetts has been
enlightened but instead of telling him
the secrets of the universe she just
says have some soup but it turns out
that under the circumstances have some
soup is the perfect thing to
say and so yeah it's possible and and
like I say full Enlightenment in this
world may not even mean anything it's
just off the scale it's it has no
samsaric meaning really you can you can
stick labels onto it you can sort of get

your head around it enough that it doesn't just have you like vacant eyed with your jaw open you know you can sort of get a handle on it at least to your own satisfaction but still it's it's off the scale nothing you can say about it in a some saric context is going to be valid

so could Enlightenment be more common than is often imagined yeah like if an enlightened person I mean this this reminds of the Sutra ping the platform Sutra of hang which is a strange Sutra or Sutra Mahayana Sutra in which Huang is said to have said that if you become enlightened you look around and see that

everyone else is enlightened too so if
you look at the world with perfect eyes
you're going to see

Perfection so in that sense um to an
enlightened person you know everyone
else is enlightened

also like Paul low used to say that he
sees everyone is perfect except they're
like wearing really ugly clothes that
doesn't fit them very that doesn't fit
them very

well so yeah it depends on how you look
at it really if you look at the world
from an enlightened point of view you're
going to see Enlightenment you know it's
like if if you're a saint you look at
the world it's all manifestation of God

it's all Perfection already but if
you're all messed up and unhappy and
miserable you look at the world it's all
messed up and miserable it's the same
world really

it's just you're looking at it in a
different
way

so yeah there's something to
that but uh again whether a fully
enlightened being can even exist in the
saric context is is questionable to me
so I'll just move on to the next
question here this is from Athena
sigil and Athena sigil says how long did
it take you to learn poly and do you

know any other languages I suspect some
Burmese perhaps um one thing is even
though I did well in school I'm
relatively intelligent um but even so
learning foreign languages was is like
one of my weakest
subjects I took Spanish for three years
in junior high school and I couldn't I
couldn't have a conversation with
somebody in Spanish I mean I know a lot
of Spanish words and that sort of thing
estu Ina
seeig inala no
in I actually was saying this to a um a
guy from Honduras that I used to work
with you know I'd ask him is stasus in
Kasa I mean he was born in a

Spanish-speaking Spanish speaking
country he could not answer the
question which caused me to think he was
some sort of
fraud

anyway so because pauly or learning
foreign languag is kind of a weak weak
subject for

me um it took me a few years until I was
good enough that I could actually
translate from poly into English and
even then I'd have to look at a
dictionary and even expert translators
they always have to have a dictionary
handy because some poly words I mean
like poly literature is limited and so

there are some poly words that you're only going to find them like one or two times in the entire titica and so you know you're what does it mean I mean you can just go with like the etymology you know the word forms and so forth and just kind of suss it out that way or you can look in the dictionary and even the dictionary like in the commentaries and they're just making guesses sometimes they don't even know what the poly words mean especially if it's like some plant species that grows in Northern India when the commentators were in Southern India and had never seen that kind of plant before anyway

so yeah it took a few years I guess but
for someone who's who just has a knack
for learning foreign languages it'll be
much faster it's really not that
difficult of a language Paulie is maybe
like Spanish with regard to it the
difficulty level it's easier than
English it's like a simplified
Sanskrit and uh any other languages well
aside from the the Spanish that I kind
of learned in junior high school yeah I
know enough to get mine I could
speak speak Burmese better than I can
speak
pully so yeah that's that's about it I
really I really have not learned a lot

of foreign languages I'm I'm good at English but uh other languages it's it's kind of a challenge to me but uh like with regard to Burmese it took me maybe a year of of studying Burmese and just being immersed in it having to speak Burmese all the time before I could like have a conversation with somebody but I met like a Swiss nun like a a Swiss Buddhist nun in Burma who I mean she was conversational in Burmese with in just a matter of weeks because Burmese is also a relatively simple language the the hardest thing about burmes is pronunciation because it's a

monosyllabic language you have to get
the

tone and like the aspirated and
unaspirated consonants just right or
else you're saying something completely
different from what you're trying to say
and people look at you like you're
speaking

Greek so yeah I think I answered that
question that was a fairly simple
straightforward question even though I
can't say exactly how long it took
because I wasn't timing it so I'll just
move on to the next question here this
is from

Austin and Austin says does your block

of marble analogy instantiate a kind of philosophical

monism and uh yeah I suppose it does I used to consider when I was in college I used to consider consider myself aist which is you're essentially saying that you know the entire universe is composed of one

Essence like uh you know the ancient Greeks were always trying to come up with what is the the ultimate essence you know somebody saying water and somebody else is saying fire um or like U Spinoza was a monist to some degree and he was saying that mind and matter are both derived from what is it I think he called it substance you know it's

just like this underlying ultimately
real substance that both mind and matter
are just two different they're just two
different aspects of the same
thing

so or uh a lot of Mahayana Buddhists
would just say it's all mind like the
the yoga charara School of Buddhism you
know it's just Consciousness only school
is also what it's called so
or say uh Christian Scientists I think
they might also agree that you know
conscious or mind is the only
reality but um yeah so I would say um
yeah the the block of marble analogy you
know the block of marble that which

contains within an infinite number of
you know every possible statue yeah I
mean it's the one Essence is
marble so yeah the short answer to that
question is yeah so I'll just move on to
the next question here this is from ruie
and ruie says are there any esoteric
aspects to the terraa that you know of
and there is a suta where the Buddha
says that he he holds nothing back
there's no esoteric teachings in early
Buddhism but in a sense there are kind
of esoteric aspects they're like de
facto esoteric aspects in that the only
people that can learn these things are
renunciant you know you want to know the
really subtle mental States you know in

a way it's esoteric because you got to renounce the world and go off and live in a cave or a cell or something and practice intensively maybe for years and years before you can experience these states and really know what they are so that's kind of esoteric you know it's not like it's hidden in secret books it's right there in the pages you know you just read you know this is what you're supposed to do you go off and you know go off into the forest and and meditate intensively cultivate Janna but in a sense Janna is esoteric because relatively few people can get into anything above first

J unless maybe it's like right when
they're in the middle of a sneeze or
something

so and technically there are no esoteric
aspects because it's all right there in
the

books but I mean some of the experiences
I mean you've got to renounce the world
and really strive you know in this
lifestyle possibly for many years before
you're going to experience some of the
stuff that's mentioned in the
books so that's kind of

esoteric so I'll just move on to ru's
next question here which is what in your
experience would be the more mystical
aspects of the Terra tradition well

anything above first J is mysticism in my opinion that Enlightenment itself is a mystical state or you you know to the extent that you can even describe it in in human

language um I think the Buddha himself was a radical Mystic who was like setting aside all the complicated technical sutas you know there are lots and lots of them where you know the Buddha is just laying out this systematic method with lists of the the four of these and the eight of those and the 37 of the other and you know it's just all this you know very atic very technical kind of stuff but you go back

to the earliest text like the otica waga
for example and it's just don't believe
anything you know have no view no
perception no attitude no preferences
and it's just in the in the moment you
just right here in the moment in the
scene there's only the scene in the
heard there's only the heard and that is
essentially mysticism I mean mysticism
is understanding a reality without
without going through the intermediary
of symbols you know it's just direct
experience of reality and that's what
Buddhism is all about really I mean
ultimately that's the
goal and I think early Buddhism was much
more overtly mystical than what Buddhism

became later on especially like terraa
with its Abid dama just all this
scholasticism got added to
it but uh yeah anything above first
Janna

would be literally a mystical State you
know like St John of the cross the
mystical doctor and he's talking about
what is essentially

jna so I think I'll just move on to the
next question here this is from heward
the wake and hereward the Wake says I
wanted to ask you whether you were
thinking of starting your own Buddhist
group with online classes failing that
do you know any other Buddhist teachers

with similar anti-political correct views to yourself who do run such classes and a number of people have have discussed this sort of thing with me um there's obviously uh a desire for this sort of

thing um and I mean I was considering when I first dropped out of the monkhood I mean I really had the idea of just becoming a Buddhist teacher but even before I dropped out of the monk Hood trying to get by as a Buddhist teacher was easier said than done you know there' always be a certain amount of of followers and supporters who were enthusiastic and eager but it was always a small group and it wasn't enough for

me to to

Really Prosper I guess you know I was
always just kind of at the edge living
from hand to mouth which is appropriate
for a monk you know monk is supposed to
live that way but

um

nowadays

um yeah it's I'm I have to work
full-time I've got a lot of a lot of
stuff on my plate um doing these q&as or
q&as um you know it's I enjoy this this
is nice you know it's it's not much
structur to it it's just the questioners
themselves are providing the structure
but if I were doing systematic classes I

would have to be coming up with a syllabus and and in to some degree even going against my own understanding of Buddhism and that you have teach like the ABCs which is kind of boring to me and then just all the systematic stuff in order to get the get it across I mean the best way to teach Buddhism is you just lead somebody out into a forest just sit there and and try not to think anything for for two hours I'll be back in two hours doing it online it would all have to be kind of academic you know with the lists of the four of these and the the seven of those and the the you know just the 18 of the

other um I mean I'm qualified to do that

I

suppose but uh yeah I don't think I'm

really going to be doing anytime real

soon partly just because of time and

energy

constraints and uh I mean I've already

got a full-time job maybe two fulltime

jobs and that uh just being in a

relationship is also a full-time job and

I I really have uh been failing in uh

devoting enough time and energy to that

full-time

job

so yeah I mean it is possible but I mean

it's not going to be anytime real super

soon so with regard to uh are do I know
of any other Buddhist teachers with
similar views to myself who do run such
classes maybe someone like aan Puna I
think I don't know if he does online
classes or not

but I would look into aan Punam up in
Canada and

uh I don't know maybe aan Sona at
Burkin I'm not sure how politically
correct or incorrect he is but I'm sure
if you look around you can find
something I'm really not uh closely
following the the Buddhist teaching
circuit you know the you know I really
don't know who the best teachers are out
there because uh I'm I'm just

not really interested in uh looking at
online Buddhist material sometimes I do
but usually I
don't so sorry about that I mean it's
still possible if I have enough people
just clamoring you know bribing me to be
a a Buddhist teacher then uh I suppose
it's still possible but really I got to
pay bills and so forth and my experience
in the past is that you know you get you
get some support but really not enough
to live

on and I'd have to just dive into it and
uh probably be a heck of a lot busier
than I am now so it's it's theoretically
possible but don't hold your breath so

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

SG and SG

says do you think it is possible to

harmonize views of different

philosophical traditions without

contradiction I my beliefs and practices

are informed by Buddhism and its many

schools adita vant and the yoga

tradition and platonism

neoplatonism all believe in an absolute

on the insufficiency and deficiency of

the relative realm with its rebirths and

on moral and spiritual practice to

differentiate between the two and attain

Enlightenment I like the different

approaches since my spiritual mood

changes now and then and sometimes I
have Vigor for asceticism and at other
times for philosophical contemplation
what are your influences and moods
thanks well it's kind of two questions
here first is do I at the top here is do
I think it is possible to harmonize
views of different philosophical
traditions without contradiction and
then at the bottom is what are my
influences and moods so I guess I should
uh separate these two into two different
questions
here
okay all right so the first question
here is is it possible to harmonized

views of different philosophical
traditions without
contradiction

um if you try to have them in their
entirety and like combine them together
yeah you're going to have contradictions
even just different schools of Buddhism
I mean the reason why there are
different schools is because they are
not in complete agreement that's why
you've got different schools because
they don't all agree with each
other

so um I mean the way you do it and I do
this too if you're eclectic you know a
western person you're going to have a
certain amount of eclecticism you're not

just going to like well I mean some people do like Jehovah's Witnesses for example they just this is their system that's all they're going to pay attention to they're just going to avoid even looking at other stuff you know they're just locked into this system and that's

it and uh I mean I just don't swing that way I mean I'm more terrible about a Buddhist than anything else but I am influenced by um you know some Mahayana Buddhism um some

Hinduism let's see I've read the D Ching probably more times than just about any other book I've

read um some some like western western
philosophy like the radical skepticism
of David Hume um schopenhauer with his
sort of Western take on a more or less
Buddhist theme of of will you know it's
like this his his idea of you know
everything in ssa being a manifestation
of Will and then you you realize that in
Buddhism karma is Will so in a way it's
like the whole world's a manifestation
of

karma so there's that there's there's
like cons elaborations on the two truths
you know ultimate truth and relative you
know the thing the thing in itself and
the thing as it seems which is uh just
another approach to explaining the

Buddhist concept of two truths or even
Hegel with his the beginning of his
dialectic where he says absolute being
is identical to Absolute
non-being so you can just pick up this
and that and just sort of form your own
philosophy with bits and parts from from
other philosophies which I think most
westerners do at least philosophically
oriented

westerners and that's fine but trying to
get the whole system you know this whole
system and that whole system and combine
them together without any contradictions
is is uh I don't think it's going to
happen because that's why they're

different schools is because they don't entirely agree I mean you can find a lot of overlap you know like you got a western you know some Western philosopher and some Eastern system you know there's lots and lots of overlap but it's it would be a just a miracle that they would just completely just blend together with no contradictions at all so generally what you do is you're an Eclectic and you just pick and choose what parts of which systems you prefer and that kind of makes us westerners lukewarm because we're not wholly committed we're not Wildey Fanatics enough to just really just

fling yourself wholeheartedly into
something you know there's always this
sort of philosophical Detachment and
lukewarmness going
on

so yeah I mean I can relate to you know
just kind of not exactly cherry-picking
but still um you know it's like parts
that you really resonate with that you
can accept and it's it's maybe teaching
pretty much the same thing is this over
here and this other system that you also
accept but it's doing it in different
words from a different angle which sort
of strengthens both both points of view
or both attempts at explaining the same

thing you know that's that's
useful or at least it can
be

so yeah I think I answered that part so
what are your influences and moods well
um I think I've kind of already mention
most of my influences you know mostly
Terra got a lot of Zen and like maaka
thrown in you know I've read the Bava
Gita and the upanishads and I really
have an appreciation for certain aspects
of those ding Western philosophy and
just my own experience you know it's
like P bossism is also in there
and uh my moods I mean sometimes I'm
more mystical and sometimes I'm more
like more of

a what do you Gana Yogi you know there's
the The Yoga of knowledge I mean that I
I kind of resonate with and then there's
Raja yoga which is the The Yoga of
practice and i' I've resonated with that
a lot in my life also I'm not much into
karma yoga or or bhakti yoga but I mean
there's you know little little elements
of

that so yeah I mean I'm pretty similar
to SG here with regard to influences and
moods and uh also with regard to the
eclecticism of a western spiritual
Seekers approach and a lot of the
teachers nowadays are are eclectic Ram
dos was eclectic he'd be talking about

Hinduism a lot he'd be talking about
Buddhism a lot he'd be talking about
Carl Yung you know he'd be talking about
western western philosophy or Western
psychology and you know throwing in a
little Sufism and you know it's just
it's all it all goes into the hopper you
know it's so long as it's
useful and there are a lot of of Western
spiritual teachers who are like
that I guess I'm like that
too so I guess I'll just move on to the
next question here this is from Joe Doe
and Joe Doe says what is the best way to
deal with anxiety and that would be the
the Panacea of Buddhism like I was
mentioning to coac sead zida with his

inferiority complex cuz he's only
6'3 it's like you just observe the
anxiety and so long as you're observing
it it's not you it's just this thing
that you're observing which creates a
philosophical Detachment which then
causes the anxiety to stop building
momentum and so if you're mindful of it
every time it arises it gradually loses
momentum and Fades out I think it was
ajan Chaz talking about
how uh like a bad habit like anxiety
here or the inferior or complex of only
being 6 fo three it's like a stray cat
where if you keep feeding it it's never
going to go away you know it's like you

you feed it every once in a while and then the rest of the time you want it to go away but it's not going to go away because you you feed it sometimes you have to like stop feeding it and it's still going to keep pestering you and pestering you for a while and finally it's going to give up and go away and it's the same way with bad habits if you're able to resist them especially not making a big deal of it but just through mindfulness you just sort of you know you note it and just let it go you know and that's the best way of dealing with it but it takes it takes practice and you have to practice it when you're not feeling anxiety you know

you have to practice it when
everything's going fine because that's
when you can practice better you know if
you just wait until you the shit's
hitting the fan before you start trying
to be mindful of it then it's it's not
going to work as well because you're
just not in the habit you want it to be
uh you want to be practicing it enough
so that when the situation arises you
know you just take care of it without
even having to like what should I do oh
yeah I should be mindful and note this
you know it it doesn't work as well as
if you just make it second nature to to
mindfully note this kind of stuff as it

arises even when it's not a big deal
because then when it is a big deal
you've already you've already got this
good habit of
mindfully noting it mindfully observing
it and detaching from it you know it's
not me it's this mental state that is
arising anxiety is arising it's not I am
anxious it's not I'm worried it's not
I'm freaked out it's anxiety is arising
and you just watch it like an ecologist
observing a dead
fish and it's easier said than done it
takes a lot of practice because we are
governed by habit that's what karma is
is is habit energy and so you got to
develop good habits to replace the bad

habits and then eventually even the good
habits have to fade out even the good
habits have to

go so I guess uh I guess I answered that
one so I'll just move on to Joe Do's

next question which is do you stretch at
all if not you should it's great for the
body U the only stretching I do is like
maybe when I get up in the morning and
just the daily activities I mean I do
have a job where there is a certain
amount of

manual manual labor involved you know I
I do work with my body to some degree
which is good I don't just sit at a desk
all day so I mean I do get some exercise

naturally I really have never been good
at artificial exercise you know if if
there's a need to exercise you know to
to walk from point A to point B or like
wood needs to be chopped or something
I'm fairly good at that but just exerc
exercising for the sake of
exercising I've never been real good at
I have I have done it
but generally I just let it be natural
stuff that arises and that's that's good
enough so this the short answer to this
do I stretch at all yeah very little
just whatever happens
spontaneously you know just get up in
the morning and
stretch you know just like this

kind of stuff you know it's no no
systematic yoga stuff at
all so I think I'll just move on to the
next question this is from hat TIG who
is also sometimes known as
Tigger and tiger or HS TIG as you may
know if you've watched these hou he's
kind of a wise guy he likes asking sort
of irreverent sorts of
questions and uh he's not letting us
down this this time and he says hi poo
can you recall a moment of your life
that you can surely characterize as your
most drunken to date please detail the
following the leadup the peak and of
course the aftermath cheers Bottoms Up

and don't be shy for life's better cross
a

well yeah I've I've given this a little
bit of thought and I think the drunkest
I've ever been in my life at least with
regard to the amount of alcohol I
consumed in one evening was the last day
of finals my sophomore year of
college and there was this guy named
Jeff who was having a party at his house
so my buddy Paul and I we bought a half
gallon of vodka and some quench which is
sort of like seven up but it tastes way
better than seven up and vodka and
quench was it was good and Paul was
pretty much of a lightweight and he
didn't come anywhere near to drinking

his share of the the half gallon so I W
up drinking more than half of a half
gallon you know like more than a quart
of vodka in one night which is probably
the most alcohol I've ever consumed in
one

night

and I mean I don't have a lot of vivid
memories of that night because well
because I was

drunk but uh I just have vague I
remember being in a swimming pool at one
point

with another friend of mine and his
girlfriend who were just were just
hanging out uh I remember Jeff who was

throwing in the party drinking raw eggs
just to show off that he drank raw eggs
sometimes and I remember right when I
was starting to really get
drunk uh there was this girl named tovy
Johnson who showed up I remember asking
her if she played tennis and then when
she said yes I just kind of turned and
walked away and I remember like d
dancing vaguely remembering dancing
which is essentially consisted of me
like standing there kind of going like
this with my
hands like walking up to someone and
going I remember that part and then
finally I remember the point where I
figured maybe I better go outside and

get get some fresh air and so I start
stagging from the kitchen through the
living room and for some reason Jeff our
host was just crying and just beating
the [_] out of his stereo I mean he's
like punching out his stereo just tears
pouring down his face I was too far gone
to even care you know I just head for
the front door and I kind of vaguely
remember walking out into the Jeff's
front yard and then I kind of vaguely
remember crawling on my hands and knees
through the same front yard there and I
wound up like in the fetus position
behind the passenger side rear tire of
my car and then I just just lying there

minding my own

business and then at some later point I vaguely remember two guys picking me up by the armpits and putting me into the back seat of my car and one of them saying I shouldn't say anything I've been like this before and then I remember waking up I mean it's like 3:00 or 4 in the morning or 5 or something you know it's like cold I just had shorts on and uh like a tank top or something and it was cold and so I'm I'm like looking I had to get up and go inside and there's like people passed out on the furniture and so forth and at some point I think it was you know after I kind of gotten up and was

was like functional semi functional
again I realized that I had just cashed
a scholarship check that day and I had
like a few thousand in my wallet and I
had lost my my wallet and finally I
found it just on a like a table like
like an end table in in in the living
room where Jeff was beating up his
stereo just with all the money still in
it so I had that I still lost one shoe
so I eventually had to throw away the
other shoe and uh that's that's about
all I remember of that night but I drank
probably at least a quart of of vodka
that night which is usually I I'd be
puking and passing out long before I got

to an entire court but I was in rare
form that

night and there you go that's that's the
story of the drunkest I ever

got which fortunately I'm happy to say

was a long time ago so we'll just move

on to the next question here and this is
from

Raphael and Raphael says that the Lotus

Sutra and other Mahayana sutras were not

spoken by the Buddha is unanimously

supported by modern scholarship there is

no academic in the last 150 years who

has argued otherwise why then are there

still monks especially Western ones who

want to be ordained in the Mahayana

tradition well that's kind of an

interesting question although I would quibble a little bit that he says here that uh that that the Lotus Sutra and other Mahayana sutras were not spoken by the Buddha is unanimously supported by modern scholarship I assume that there's going to be some Mahayana Buddhists who are Scholars who are going to say that the Buddha taught all the Mahayana sutras or at least their favorite ones and I mean I have there's on the Discord server there is a pure land Buddhist and he's very serious you know he's kind of in a way kind of puritanical I'm not trying to to badmouth him but he's got like this Dow very serious kind of

approach to his Buddhism and he just flat out asserts the Buddha taught pure land Buddhism I mean he has no doubt and you know he'll have these arguments you know like the oldest inscriptions of Buddhism are Mahayana ones that are found in Central Asia or something and so he's he's trying to build up a case that you know the Buddha really did teach Mahayana Buddhism despite the fact that the overwhelming majority of Buddhist Scholars agree Mahayana Buddhism did not exist for hundreds of years until you know until after the Buddha passed away hundreds of years after after the Buddha passed away I should

say but it's sort of like you know Bible
creationism you've got biologists you
know

scientists who are devout Christians and
so they become like young Earth

creationists and they're just trying to
use I mean it's pseudoscience really

because they're starting with the

conclusion they want to arrive at and

just kind of working backwards trying to

find any plausible justification for

creationism you know they'll bash away

at at evolutionary theory you know

they'll just say it's not possible it's

wrong wrong wrong wrong wrong and then

they'll come up with even like weaker

flabbier cases to support creationism
and I assume they're going to be
Mahayana Buddhist Scholars who are going
to say the Buddha taught Mahayana
Buddhism you know it it's the highest
teachings and and and on and
on so uh it's not unanimous I'm pretty
sure but uh see why are there still
monks especially Western ones who want
to be ordained in Mahayana tradition
well that's something that I used to
think about a lot too and because I
started off liking Zen and then the more
I study terava the more I realize terava
comes closer to what the Buddha
originally taught in most respects so I
switched over to

terava but some people just don't care
about I mean even this pure land
Buddhism uh pure land Buddhist I was
talking about also I mean to some degree
he just doesn't
care I mean it's like I mean one of the
arguments is the Buddha lived so long
ago he's kind of like Hercules or
something he's like a semi mythological
figure anyway you can't really say for
sure what he taught and so the important
thing is you know does it work for
you and so I mean if mahay on Buddhism
works for somebody it makes them feel
good it makes them a better person
they're making spiritual progress by f

following it then I mean that's good enough for a lot of people they don't really care whether that is the original form of of Buddhism I mean Christianity nowadays certainly is not the original form of

Christianity but most Christians follow modern Christianity they're not rejecting modern Christianity and becoming some ROP making hermit in Egypt somewhere so yeah a lot of people just don't care whether the Buddha Really T Mahayana or they they're just not Scholars they don't I mean that sort of thing just has no appeal to them all the scholarly debate about you know what the original Buddhism was like you know even

terado is not does not accurately
represent the original

Buddhism and in some respects Mahayana
some like the the Perfection of wisdom
School of Mahayana and to some degree
maaka also I mean they were like reform
moments trying to get back to what the
Buddha originally

taught um I mean there's like the
buddhis SATA concept which wasn't there
I'm pretty sure pure land stuff wasn't
there I'm I'm relatively certain but um
yeah just different people have
different temperaments and different
people really just don't care about
unanimous agreement by modern

scholarship you know they they want to believe it it just resonates with them it just clicks with them maybe they were Mahayana Budd in previous lives and they just got a lot of momentum in that direction and so I mean you can use any kind of like logical argument but when you're trying to use a logical argument to justify religion which isn't really essentially logical

anyway then yeah just a lot of religious people just don't care about objective rational logical empirical arguments what they care about is how does it make me feel and it makes them feel good then it's

good so I guess I answered that one more

or less so let's move on to the next question this is from the ARA swasti project and the ARA swasti project says greetings poo it occurred to me yesterday if you move in any direction in the universe and since the universe is infinite you haven't really moved at all because you have the same infinite distance in any direction that you move you haven't gone anywhere same goes with time a moment ago there are infinite moments before that and an infinite number in the future are these kind of examples of paradoxes we could consider for being and not being to be possible at the same time the thought certainly

had its effect on yesterday's hahaa

yesterday's

meditation and for those of you that uh

didn't notice I just kind of picked my

nose a little bit like just trying to

like pretend like I'm not picking it and

then just because it itches really bad

right in there cuz like I say I've been

sick and kind of nose congest and all

sorts of

things so I'm just coming

clean all right so with regard to this I

mean let's see see you see you're not

really moving because the universe is

infinite and but I mean you're moving

with a guard to everything around you

and that's really what matters you know

that's how you judge whether you're moving or not is by you know are the trees going by you you know if the trees are going by you that means you're moving and um I mean just going with modern mathematics you've got cartesian coordinate systems I was talking about cartesian coordinate systems in a previous Q&A not too long ago where you just have like a an XY axis which is arbitrary you can just put it anywhere you put this XY axis anywhere or in three dimensions it would be XYZ for four dimensions you'd have t for time and then I mean you're moving in relation to that XY that cartesian

coordinate

system and that you you pretty pretty
much anchor that to you know you know
something that is relatively immobile
you know like the you know the ground or
something the Blackboard you the wall
whatever so you're moving relative to
other things around you which is really
all that matters I mean in the
philosophical sense you're always in the
center of the
universe no matter where you go there
you are you know as Buckaroo Bonsai once
said but uh you know
obviously we do seem to move when we
stand up and kind of move our legs back
and forth like this you know things kind

of move around us anyway we're making
the whole world move by seeming to
move so

yeah I don't I don't think that would be
um a good way of trying to prove that
being and non-being are possible at the
same time I mean being and non-being
have to be have to exist at the same
time because they rely on each other for
each other's existence one without the
other is

meaningless so you have to have contrast
between being and non-being for there
even to be any perception of being and
non-being so yeah that's um sort of like
uh stability and and and Chaos you know

they have to be in Balance you can't
have pure stability because that's just
death you know nothing moves nothing
changes death but pure chaos I mean
that's just I mean you can't have life
in pure chaos either because nothing has
enough cohesion or stability to last for
more than one moment so you have to have
these two of stability and Chaos you
know like Stillness and motion
I mean they have there has to be this
contrast between them in balance in
order for this world to exist same goes
for being and
non-being but that's that's a whole
different argument I think from the fact
that you don't go anywhere because the

universe is

infinite yeah I think it's I think that
would be like at least in my mind that'd
be two entirely different arguments or
two very different arguments

anyway so I think I'll just move on to
the Arya sasti Project's next question
here

and he says since you are a biologist
has anyone asked before what came first
the chicken or the egg and if not which
did come first the chicken or the egg
and if neither came first could you use
this Paradox as an exercise to transcend
Sam Sora well so it's it's like a Zen

[__] what came first the chicken or the

egg yeah it might be some some Western
Zen guy used that as a [__] and it got
him into story or something he got
kenow but as a biologist has anyone
asked before what came first the chicken
yeah I've I've encountered that question
a number of times and I do have an
answer for it the egg came first because
what laid the egg was something that was
almost a
chicken and then there was like this
mutation in its embryo that in this egg
that it laid that just pushed it right
over the EG into being a chicken the
world's first
chicken but the world's first chickens
mama and daddy were almost chickens and

but they just were lacking this one last mutation that would be required for them to be like genuine legitimate chickens or red jungle fowl or or whatever so that would be my my answer at least with regard to uh evolutionary theory I'm no new Earth creationist I guarantee it although I I can't disprove that this universe didn't just poof into existence yesterday and that we were some deity with a strange sense of humor just implanted memories of stuff into us that never happened I mean there's no way you can prove that that it that it is or is not true but yeah the egg came first and the

egg laid the egg was laid by uh a hen
that was almost chicken and then her
baby was different enough from her that
actually qualified as being a real
chicken so I'll just move on to the next
question here this is from keep D
vinia and keep D vinia says I am afraid
of having children because I don't want
them to become mediocre consumerist and
promiscuous degenerates if I were Amish
for example I would have no problem
having children because those children
would grow up in a non-materialistic
society where values play an important
role so as long there is no utopian
Buddhist Society I can't think of having
children can you understand my point

yeah I can understand it I was I was similar I had different reasons though like back when I was a young man before I became a monk I didn't want to have children mainly because I was a biologist and you know there's the the threat of nuclear war the Cold War was still going on uh there was no his hysteria about global warming but I mean there was the the hysteria of the possibility of nuclear winter which was more of a threat than uh any sort of um you know dying Earth scenario from too much CO₂ in the environment or in the atmosphere um also I considered the world to be already obscenely

overpopulated so I didn't want to have children because of that but then when I was a monk in living in Burma I used to think that if I did have kids I mean if I had a boy I'd rather bring him up in the west but if I had a girl I'd rather bring her up in a traditional culture like Burma because it would just break my heart to see her become a little thought you know t h o t you know what that

is to see her become this this promiscuous little [__] I mean that would just break my heart it would just kill

me but I mean if you're a good parent I mean there are things you can do

homeschool your kids keep them away from
the indoctrination camps of of the
academic

institutions of the

West you know there are things you can
do you know become Amish it says right
there if you're Amish you would have no
problem

so yeah I mean I grew up in a mediocre
consumerist uh culture with plenty of
promiscuous degenerates and I did okay
you know I mean if if you raise your
children relatively well and they've got
good enough Karma I suppose they should
be
okay but

uh

yeah yeah I do understand your point I mean that's the only question here can you understand my point the answer is yes I can understand your point and I had my own reasons although of course um now in retrospect I know that World War III didn't

happen and uh

yeah I I could have had kids and uh it probably would not have been the end of the world it would have resulted in me being a lot more stressed out as a human being over the course of my life I am sure a lot more worries a lot more attachments that sort of thing but um I'll just move on to the

next question now this is also from keep
theia and he says does a lay person
create bad comma if he refuses to give
alms to a monk who obvious viously is
breaking a rule like a monk who doesn't
cover both shoulders during MMS round or
who wears a t-shirt under the robe is a
lay person also allowed to correct a
monk on such issues okay that's another
question so I got to separate
that okay all right so this is another
one of these um is it bad comma to do
this or that sort of question and really
I mean if you refuse to give alms to a
monk who's obviously breaking rule I
mean that's you're not doing

anything you know it's it's not positive
or negative comma to just not do
something and that includes not giving
Ms to a monk so it depends on your
mental States I mean why are you not
giving Ms to that monk if it's because
of

like you have aversion for the monk
because he's not practicing then there's
going to be a certain amount of Dosa and
there's going to be a certain amount of
bad comma but I mean if you're having
like bad thoughts like I shouldn't be
giving this to this monk it's like you
know you feel like you're obligated but
at the same time you consider him to be
a bad Monk and so you're G to have this

conflict going on you're going to be making karma from that too possibly of both sorts positive and negative cusa and

ausa so really it depends it depends on your mental States I mean if you I mean I wouldn't want to donate to a monk that obviously is just behaving badly you know let's say he's going for alms round and he's asking for money you know he's like no I don't I don't need any food just I just give me five bucks that's good then I wouldn't give him anything in fact I'd tell him probably that I mean that's just against the rules you're not supposed to do that and I

probably wouldn't give him
anything and that's what makes monks
better I mean if you if you support
monks you know if if the society
supports monks no matter how LAX and
Shameless they are it encourages more
monks to be LAX and Shameless but I mean
if good monks get more support than bad
monks it encourages more monks to be
good
monks but so so it depends on your
mental States I mean if you if you're
motivated by this like contempt or you
know aversion or something then yeah I
mean you're going to get a little hit of
of Bad Karma for just for the mental
States not for not giving him anything

because not giving him anything is not
doing anything and that's not
Karma

so try to have positive mental States
for not giving the monk something it's
like you know you want to help the
sa by encouraging good monks and not
encouraging bad monks then by not giving
food to the bad monk or whatever it is
that he wants then in a way you've got a
good reason for that instead of just you
know [__] this guy he's he's breaking a
rule what a what a maroon you know and
then you know you're like have this bad
mental attitude towards him ill will or
something you want him to be punished by

going hungry that day then obviously
you're making bad karma for yourself so
it depends on your mental state if you
can with equinity or even love in your
heart you don't give anything to the
monk because you know he's obviously a
LAX you know unconscious ious monk you
don't want to support lack unconscious
unconscientious sa you want to you want
to endorse and support a conscientious
you know s that follows the rulle
strictly and so forth then so long as
you have like a positive attitude you
know of wanting to help the song and not
help it go
downhill then I think you'd be doing
okay but you have to be really careful

mental States I mean they're very fickle and changeable and hard to you know it's hard to know exactly what your motives are because you're not going to be 100% mindful of everything going through your mind so you just got to be careful so then I'll move on to the next question from um keep the Venia here is the lay person allowed to correct a monk on such issues you can point it out to him although he probably knows as well as you do that he's breaking the rule and he just doesn't care because I have this old Burmese monk telling me once that I mean he was he was relatively strict and he was saying you know you

can wake up someone who's sleeping but
you can't wake up someone who's just
pretending to sleep and the meaning of
that is you know they know that they're
breaking the rule and they're doing it
anyway pointing out to them that they're
breaking the rule isn't going to help
anything because they don't
care you know they've already got it
Justified they've got it worked out in
their mind that you know this is what
there're they should be doing is break
this rule because everyone else is
breaking it how are you going to get by
without ask asking for money or
whatever or it's cold I got to wear this
t-shirt cuz cuz it's cold or

whatever so I mean you can point it out to them but um it's a good idea that you shouldn't really try to admonish anybody a monk or a lay person if you don't have meta in your heart there is a rule in the text with regarding monks saying that a monk should not admonish another Monk if he doesn't have meta in his heart you know if he's just [__] at him you're just venting you know he's in a bad mood and just Cutting Loose on this guy you know regardless of his of you know the external reasons you know just the internal reasons aren't good enough so if you're motivated by meta you know you got meta in your heart then you can

pretty much say

anything so I'll just move on to the
next question from ke theia is there a
hierarchy among monks except for the
Abbot of a monastery

um well according to vinia according to
like the poly Tex themselves the
hierarchy is with regard to seniority
Whoever has been among the longest
outranks you know everybody else and so
whether you bow to another Monk or not
depends on whether you were ordained
after him or before him so if he's been
a monk for eight years you've been a
monk for six years you call him bante
and you bow to him and I mean he doesn't
doesn't have the right to boss you

around I mean according to the rules of monastic discipline the whole concept of an Abbot is just foreign to to vinea to foreign to the rules of monastic discipline the whole idea of Abbots it just arose in Asia just sort of I don't know it's like the Abbott is King like in Burma the Abbott is he's like dictator of the monastery anything he says goes usually he's the senior monk but sometimes he's just the most famous monk and you've got some older monks than him that you know they're just sort of like semi-retired you know they're starting to go scile or something they just mind their own

business they're technically senior to him but they're they have no Authority so usually it's the senior monk but sometimes it's just the most famous monk who got this Monastery donated to him or something so it's kind of his place he can let senior monks senior monks to him stay but still he gets to still be the Abbot but um so it's like the main authorities aside from just the sa in general you know like if the the sa unanimously consents to do something that's that's the authority but uh like if you're still a junior monk living in dependence on a teacher that teacher has authority over you you should do what

the teacher tells you to do unless he's telling you to do something that's unethical or against the rules or something then you should find yourself a different teacher but then you get into like a Buddhist culture like Burma or Thailand you've got like a government supported ecclesiastical hierarchy like at the top in Thailand is the S Raja the top in Burma supposedly is the S mahanayak who is I mean he's like the the highest monk in the country and then you've got like the ecclesiastical Council of monks below him I think in Thailand it's like somets or something like that you know they're like Bishops

under the pope or Cardinals and then you got Bishops below that and like prelates and priests and deacons you know there is kind of a chain of command sort of but just according to the text themselves it's all based on two things one is just seniority you know you you have to pay respect to a senior monk you know if a senior monk approaches you when you're sitting you're supposed to stand up you're not allowed to be wearing shoes if he's Barefoot you know like if you're in close proximity to each other just out of respect you got to show respect to the senior monks you call them Bon senior monks called Junior monks

A0 and and then also in addition to just just raw seniority there is the issue of like the preceptor and the teachers like who have authority over the monks that they have the junior monks that they have ordained that are not do not have enough seniority that they can just go solo and that's that's it but it doesn't necessarily work that way in Asia where you've got Asian Concepts like traditional like medieval Asian Concepts that have been imported into terraa Buddhism so you've got ecclesiastical hierarchies and Abbots who are the dictator of their Monastery and so forth so I'll just move on to the

next question here from keep divinia are monks allowed to take care of children in an orphanage and teach them I don't think there's any rule against it I mean in a way it's it's sort of not what monks are supposed to do they're supposed to just go off like and wander alone like the Horn of the rhinoceros you know they're supposed to be striving for enlightenment but still it happens a lot in Thailand and in Burma you're going to have monks who have who run like a a school or an orphanage like in one part of their monastery and you know they're just doing trying to do good you know they're they're humble or they're just

not

really ripe for

enlightenment and so they're just trying

to do good and that's not entirely a bad

thing might not be what monks are

supposed to do according to the

texts but there's a lot worse things you

can do than to feed and take care of

Orphans

so yeah I don't I don't think that uh I

mean so long as they're not out

fundraising and just Breaking All the

Rules in order to take care of the

orphans then uh I mean you can manage to

be a good Monk and run an orphanage at

the same time you can be a conscientious

monk who follows the rules who
nevertheless you know teaches little
kids how to read and
write you know in a way it's a
distraction that the texts kind of don't
encourage that but still
there's a lot worse things you can
do so I think I'll just move on to keep
the as next question what Supernatural
events do you have evidence of and
believe well I mean the evidence of you
know I've read a lot of books lots and
lots of um accounts of you know even
like firsthand accounts or for by the
time I'm reading it secondhand because
you know I'm reading somebody else
saying this happened to me you know ROM

Doss had lots of stories of like neim
cly Baba doing Miracles and I think that
Ron Doss is was an honest person I don't
think he was just lying you know

Shameless

liar um I think he might have been kind
of naive and just accepted other
people's accounts at face value
sometimes when he shouldn't have but
still I don't think that he was a
dishonest just habitual liar and so a
lot of the stuff he says about maharaji
I think is probably probably true you
know read Miracle of love stories about
neim Koli Baba edited by ROM Doss and
you're going to just just get hit in the

face hit over the head with Miracle
after Miracle after a miracle and even
if only 10% of them are true man was
still like

Superman but with regard to me
personally it's hard to know for sure if
something is a supernatural event you
know it's like my sweetheart and I just
happened to be thinking exactly the same
weird thought and I just comes out of my
mouth and she her jaw drops and she
stares at me and tells me to get out of
her head because that's the same thing
she was thinking something like that you
know you can talk about this sort of
like a subliminal
connection uh which could be I mean not

so much Supernatural but it would be like Paranormal you know it would be like ESP or something that kind of thing or just weird things can happen you have like a precognitive dream you dream that something happens and then it happens or a Deja Vu I had a Deja Vu once where I mean I knew in advance what someone was going to say in that room I'm just sitting there grinning like an ape just waiting for them to say it and then I'm sure enough somebody says it but uh I mean it's hard to say if that's really I mean that could just be like synchronicity which isn't necessarily Supernatural or

paranormal I mean kind of it is maybe
not necessarily though but the I think
the the most Supernatural event that
I've

experienced um and I've I've mentioned
this before I've mentioned it more than
once I've written about it it was uh we
we had a poltergeist in our house that
stuff would just spontaneously break you
know handles would pop off of Cups and
and like silverware would just get bent
and twisted in the drawers or whatever
and so I was about 12 years old 12 or 13
years old my father was hiring a new
housekeeper for the for the
summertime and so we're all sitting at
the kitchen table and my father was at

one end of the table the new housekeeper
was sort of kitty corner just on the
other side of the corner right in
between them was an ash tray I was
sitting at the other end of the table
maybe five feet away it wasn't a really
big kitchen table and he's explaining to
her if you see anything broken in the
house broken glass wear in the cupboards
that sort of thing don't don't
immediately blame the kids because we've
got a pist in the house and stuff
spontaneously
self-destructs and when he's explaining
this to her it's like one of her
eyebrows is going up and she's getting

this grin on her face like she can't decide whether he's lying or joking or crazy but within just a matter of a few seconds like right as soon as he finishes this explanation of how Stuff spontaneously self-destructs in this house that ashtray that was right in between them on the just in plain view on the kitchen table makes this sound like zinc and just splits into two halves and the two halves like slide about an inch and a half away from each other and then she immediately stops smiling and starts taking him seriously because it just self-destructed with nobody touching it and you could say well it's it's like the the uneven

heating from a lit cigarette in the ashtray but that that that ashtray had had hundreds if not thousands of lit cigarettes in it before and it never self destructed like that before so you'd have to say at the very least it was one hell of a coincidence that it self-destructed within about five seconds of my father describing how things self-destruct how glass objects just spontaneously break in our house so I think that anything is possible anything that's imaginable is possible at least in a metaphysical sense but um yeah I'm I'm not a materialist I think that the laws of

physics can be

broken but it also depends on Psychic

talent and the amount of Faith you've

got and so forth and I really do do not

have a lot of psychic talent I mean I've

some people there's they can see spirits

and gabas and all kinds of things and

I've never been like that my father was

more of a psychic than I

was but I think

yeah I'm not a materialist I don't think

that we're just stuck in laws of physics

and uh laws can be

broken so I think I'll just leave it at

that maybe that's not a very complete

explanation or answer to the question

but I got more to answer and keep the

Winnie has another question here which is what are your thoughts on monasteries in the west where be and beunis live together isn't this almost impossible according to the suas since the Buddha said the following in the dean nikaya how shall we relate to women Master do not look at them but if one sees one master do not address her but if one talks to us keep mindfulness and self-control so that was Ananda asking the Buddha what to do about women and the Buddha is just saying you know don't look at them don't talk to them be careful and yeah I mean there is a different sua where it's just saying

that one of the signs of decline of the
the sasana the decline of Buddhism in in
the world as monks and nuns will be
living together at the same

Monastery so that's that is a sign that
we are approaching the end
times but

uh yeah I mean it's not a good idea and
even if they're not um you know

beunis but they're just like eight
precept nuns or something still monks
and celibate men and celibate women who
are sexually frustrated potentially
probably living together in the same

Community is just asking for trouble and
the trouble does happen

sometimes so it's probably best if monks

and nuns have their own
places so I'll just move on to the next
question here and this is from Tim the
enchanter and Tim the enchanter says
please give some instructions to walking
meditation like how many step
what to focus on

Etc well I mean there's no just one way
of doing walking meditation there are as
many different kinds of walking
meditation as there are sitting
meditation I

suppose u i mean anytime you're walking
you can be doing walking meditation you
can be walking to work walking up and or
down the stairs walking down a hallway

you know walking down the sidewalk you
can be doing walking meditation because
you are walking so you can do it
meditatively

um but if you want to do formal walking
meditation when for starters you need a
sufficiently long little place to walk
back and forth because you're you're
going to be walking back and forth and
it should be like at least 20 steps I
mean you don't want it so short that
you're just like turning you know
stepping turning stepping turn you know
it has to be you start getting dizzy
that way if you've got too short of a
walking meditation path so it should be
at least like 20 steps I guess and you

just walk back and forth and there are different ways of doing it just like there's different ways of of doing sitting meditation or even or even meditation on the breath there are many different ways that you can even do anapana on on the breath same way with walking meditation like the standard mahasi method for doing walking meditation for the beginner is just you know picking up and setting down you're just being mindful of your feet coming up and going down coming up and going down you know lift and then usually after you've gotten that down enough then you you divide it up into three

parts you know your foot lifting then
moving forward and then touching the
ground and then the other foot lifting
moving forward touching the ground and
so it's you know lifting moving touching
lifting moving touching lifting moving
touching that that would be like the
mahasi method

of um doing walking meditation but even
then when your mindfulness gets deeper
then I mean you can just just keep going
I mean there's there's no limit how many
steps you can put for for each step you
know it's just just you know like the
intention to move and then the actual
muscles moving and so forth and the
pressure on the like the ball of your

foot and your heel coming up off the floor and then there's like the foot lifting up and the muscles involved and the joints bending and I mean you can just I mean just as much as you can fit in there you you can fit in there there or I mean you don't necessarily even have to contemplate you know the Motions of your feet or your legs when you're doing walking meditation you can just be like seeing mindfulness of seeing mindfulness of hearing um this so long as you're being mindful of something while you're doing walking then that's walking meditation so I used to just do seeing a lot or

another one that I've mentioned before
is one of the most obvious Sensations
when I when I be doing walking
meditation is just like this oily smooth
gliding feeling in the joints of my
knees so I might con concentrate on
that so and also for like real beginners
you can even be counting your steps you
know you just count 1 2 3 4 5 1 2 3 4 5
6 1 2 3 4 5 six 7 up to 1 2 3 4 five six
seven eight nine 10 and then once you
get up to 10 then you go back to five
again and and
that's that's like a beginnner just sort
of like in beginning Ana you can just be
counting your breaths in in a similar
way so I mean so long as you're mindful

of something whatever

sensation is easiest to note it's that's

really taking the Forefront of of your

your attention just be mindful of that

while you're walking and you're doing

walking meditation like sometimes I

would just do M also like M every third

step or something like

that so whatever works for you and it

keeps your mind from wandering your your

mind is focused on on something you're

actually being mindful then then you're

doing a good

job so I think I'll just move on to the

next question here this is from Fred and

Fred says hey friend what does poo basa

mean

poasa and that's uh yeah that's that's
that's a good question it's actually a
combination of two words PA and
obasa and I I generally don't pronounce
my own name correctly because there's an
H in there obasa so actually you're
supposed to pronounce the h so it' be P
pahasa so the PA just means
understanding or wisdom usually is
translated as wisdom although like biku
uh the the first famous bikun yanle not
the second famous bikun yanle the one
who translated the wisi Maga into
English um he used understanding as a as
a translation for PA and that that's a
good that's a good translation I think

so I go with understanding a lot and
obasa it's uh it means shine down it's
like down shine it's like The Shining of
the Sun the Sun's shining
down so um my name poasa literally means
something like understanding
shine or I mean if you want to be super
literal the P at the beginning of PA so
so the two words PA and obasa are
themselves like a root with a prefix
like NY just means knowledge like in in
Greek it has the same Indo-European
atmology as the word the Greek
gnosis that like Nana or like in
Sanskrit I think it's Gana it's you know
it's the same or the k o k n o w in in

no I mean it's the same it's it's the
same um like indoeuropean Proto
Indo-European atmology so it just means
knowledge the Theo or the the in my name
paa and the p
is um it means like forth going forth
like P the Greek prefix P or py Ro Omron
or
whatever um you know it's means it's
like a forwards Direction so PA I mean
literally it it would have the same
atmology as the Greek word
prognosis but it has a different meaning
because it it just means the P0 or the
forwardness is just sort of an
intensifier you know it sort of
strengthens the knowledge you know it's

knowledge going forwards you know it's
this right knowledge and basa me means
shine and the o means

downwards so it's it's literally poasa
means fourth node down

shine but Mr understanding shine is good
enough so I'll just move on to the next
question and this is the very last
question and this is from

Stevie and he didn't ask ask this in the
the question and answer room but he
asked it in the Terra room which is good
enough let's say

in in the Discord server so he says does
the poly Canon ever describe any
extraordinary natural events such as an

eclipse or the Aurora

Borealis well I mean the Aurora Borealis

I cannot recall ever being mentioned in

the poly texts eclipses are mentioned

and also earthquakes are mentioned

um storms are mentioned but um those are

generally would be caused by storm

Gods like uh Shiva was originally rudra

I guess who was a storm

God but let's see here so does the

polyan ever describe any extraordinary

natural events such as an eclipse or

yeah it it describes eclipses and

earthquakes those would be the two most

extraordinary natural events that are

described in the in the poly Canon

eclipses according to the ancient text

according to just Indian folklore are caused by um an assura like a giant Titanic kind of Godlike being named rahu who swallows them into his mouth so that's what causes eclipses is you got this giant demonic kind of being up in outer space who will swallow the sun or moon into his mouth causing them to disappear and then um he has to spit them back out again or in in later Hindu mythology it was just his head is up there so that he swallows it and then it comes out through his like severed esophagus but there are some sutas in the in the samut nikaya in which rahu swallows the moon and then the the

Buddha rebukes him and causes him to spit it back back out again and the same thing happens with the the sun it's like rahu swallows the Sun and then the god of the sun comes and complains to the Buddha and then the Buddha goes and rebukes rahu and then rahu has to spit it back out again which is kind of I mean it's it's mythology you know it's one of those psychic powers that you have to be a little skeptical of when you read about it because I mean the Buddha is not always around every time there's an eclipse there's been eclipses before and after the Buddha and he's not around to rebuke rahu to make them to make him spit the sun or moon back out

and I think nowadays the the rahu theory of eclipses is pretty much obsolete even in devoutly budhist countries and with regard to

earthquakes um like the Maha parasuta I already mentioned earthquakes in that and there's even the Buddha gives a list of the reasons for earthquakes then the first reason is actually like a a natural reason in that the Earth floats on water and the water is floating on air and perturbations in the air cause perturbations in the water which causes the Earth to shake which I mean isn't exactly accurate but still that's fairly good guess by you know naturalistic

philosophers in Ancient India I

suppose um you know some some Modern

Buddhists will say there see the Buddha

knew all about you know plate tectonics

and so forth because the Earth is

surface of the Earth is floating on

liquid but I mean it's not saying it's

floating on liquid magma it says it's

floating on water and that was the

belief in Ancient

India

so yeah I mean you're going to get

premodern explanations for things

which um may sound very mythological and

sort of fairy talish by modern standards

but really who knows maybe 500 years

from now assuming that Civilization

doesn't collapse but continues
progressing who knows what the
explanation of eclipses and earthquakes
is going to be because um you know it
may be that you know the obvious answers
to these questions nowadays they've got
like other answers kind of supporting
the first answer you know it's like it's
still you know an eclipse of the sun
happens when the new moon comes in
between the Sun and the Earth but I mean
there may some other explanation for it
that that is even more true that we
can't even comprehend at this
point
so um yeah I wouldn't go too hard on

Ancient Indians for having no real understanding of what causes earthquakes or Eclipses because you know it was a premodern age I mean science hadn't been invented yet really so they just uh they had to have some kind of reason Reon so generally you just had a kind of myth and a lot of people still go with myths

so that I guess that's it I guess I answered all the questions and I'm sorry that um that uh the Buddha didn't have like preent understanding of modern science that is preserved in the poex but you know we're all products of our culture even enlightened beings because

um just because you're enlightened
doesn't mean that you're going to know
integral calculus or how to speak Han
Chinese or anything like that you're not
necessarily fully omniscient and really
that like explanations for what causes
eclipses or earthquakes or Aurora
Borealis or whatever um that's not
Ultimate Reality anyway that's just the
dream that's that's phenomena occurring
in The Matrix that understanding
Ultimate Reality is something completely
different than
that so I guess I'm um I guess I
answered all the questions and if I've
been sort of low Vibe and and seeming

kind of like unwell then uh I hope
you've you've got patience with that and
hopefully next weekend I'll be feeling
better and uh regardless of uh of my
feeling unwell we can still be happy
which is an important thing to uh to
bear in mind that uh whether you're
happy or not doesn't really depend on um
like physical stuff so much as just it's
a matter of attitude and I have to
remind myself of that because it's easy
for me to just
withdraw and like a turtle you know just
pulling your arms and legs and head and
just wait to feel better when I mean
You' got to interact with other people
and stuff

and so it's I have to be a social being
now so anyways if you got more questions
do you think I can answer uh feel free
to ask in the question in in the
comments ments below or if you got
access to the Discord server you can ask
them there if you got dis um access to
the Subscribe Star channel you can ask
them there and uh check out the URL
links below and be
happy

hello and welcome to question and answer
number

5,365 which is kind of what it seems
like to me now because it's getting it's
up to 65 already which is just amazing
to me anyway I am your host P basa Mr
understanding shine translated literally
into

English and uh this is my
beverage and this is my emergency backup
beverage just in case the first beverage
is not

sufficient and we got like the standard
medium length number of questions here
to

answer and I'm uh feeling much better

than I was last few weeks when I
contracted some disease and was just
sort of I don't know in a state of
contraction and with droll pretty much
happened a lot as a monk too so it's not
like any kind of violent reaction
against being a lay
person was just like sometimes you just
kind of you know it's like my
Consciousness expands and contracts like
the Buddhist Cosmos and in contracted
phases sometimes I'm like a turtle that
just kind of pulls in its legs and its
head and its tail and just kind of
withdraws you know I was in a state
along those lines for a few weeks and
then getting sick didn't help but I'm

feeling better I just have like the
standard mild hangover on Saturday not a
hangover from booze but a hangover from
just work and sleep deprivation
throughout most of the week and then
usually Sunday I feel kind of normal and
then it's reset
again it's uh part of uh getting older I
suppose it's one thing that I've noticed
about getting older is it's
like your your life force Your vitality
is reduced so you can act just as young
you know I can work harder than the
young guy guys at work and so forth but
it just takes more out of you to to keep
it

going but enough of that I think I'm
going to start answering questions now
because that is the purpose of this
video me sitting here answering
questions and the first question is from
Fred and Fred says what in the cheetah
has preferences and the cheah here is
just the poly word usually translated as
mind and it really in in Buddhism it
mainly refers to just mental processes
in general um in a more technical sense
it can mean uh Consciousness but here it
just I assume it just means mental
processes in general and uh the what in
the Chet has preferences it'd be mainly
volition or cha although there would
have to be perception or SAA

inextricably involved in that so it' be
will and representation using
schopenhauer's terminology or at least
the translator of schopenhauer's
terminology so it'd be mainly volition
you know the actual choosing would be an
active volition but you can't choose
without something that you perceive to
choose so volition and perception are
just in a way they're just two aspects
of the same

process so I'll just move on to Fred's
next question here what's your insights
on CA

some monks almost give them personality
traits are they just the hindrances well

caas is like the

Sanskrit version of the poly word kilesa

which is usually translated as

defilement so anything that is uh UNH

wholesome impure something that is not

helping you to become enlightened but is

actually preventing you from becoming

enlightened would qualify as a

kesa and uh he says here some monks

almost give them personality traits but

some personality traits can be kesas I

mean if you've got greedy personality

traits or hostile personality traits or

so

forth then those would qualify as kesis

because they're helping you to stay

unenlightened so they're not just the

hindrances because the hindrances are
this list of five and kesas are more
General than that just
anything that uh is a part of your
personality that is unenlightened would
qualify as the

kesa anything that helps you to remain
unenlightened and so I guess I'll just
move on to the next question here this
is from The Dark

Knight uh spelled uh K N I G H T so it's
from Batman apparently in the Dark

Knight says why do you refer to yourself
as poob basan since you are no longer a
monk well I've been named named poo basa
for literally half my lifetime I assume

I've earned the name and I mean I don't call myself poasa beu anymore because I'm not a beu but the name poasa me is just it's like a name it's like a nickname or something and uh I mean it's not that having a poly name necessarily means that you're a monk like in the Buddhist time people weren't given a new name their ordination they just had like a poly or you know a language similar to poly I mean their name would be part of that and that's just what they'd be called like sorrya just means son of sorry and uh names like kasapa and I think molana um I mean those are just family

names like Goa was also like a family or
or clan

name so having a poon name doesn't
necessarily imply that you're a monk and
uh people who aren't monks can have poly
nicknames I mean there's nothing I mean
there's nothing against any rule for
that so since I've been called poasa for
most of my adult life and since possibly
most people who call me by a name
nowadays still call me that or poo that
uh I don't really see any great need to
stop calling myself that I mean it's
just a name I really don't care about
names I go by at least three different
names um my first name my middle name

and my poly name so it's not a big deal
for me I don't really identify with it
it's just a matter of I don't know
convenience or habit or whatever so I'll
just move on to the next question this
is from trust wet
farts and Trust wet farts says do you
see people's eyes glowing and he asked
me this question before I'm pretty
pretty sure and I just kind of didn't
answer it I don't answer 100% of all
questions and I don't know I just seemed
like it wasn't really an Earnest
question or something but he asked it
again so I guess I was mistaken and he
really does want to know the answer to
this and the reason why he asks me if I

see people's eyes glowing is because
sometimes like on my avatars or on some
of my video thumbnails I'll have like
the glowing eyes or once or twice my dog
GIS also has had glowing
eyes and so he wants to know if I really
see people that way and the answer is no
I do not see people that way I got the
idea originally from memes you know
there's like the memes of the red eyes
like the laser beam eyes I don't know I
just kind of lik that idea so I went
with it so I'll just move on to the next
question here this is uh from
sakuta son of the
sakya and uh sakya Puda says I suppose

that being a monk for such a long time
caus you to be very cautious and
selective in your interactions with
other people maybe even reluctant to
allow many new relationships to prosper
and deepen given the fact that there are
probably not many kalana mitas around to
supply at least in day-to-day lay
settings in Supply at least in
day-to-day settings do you feel that's
the case for you if it is how do you
deal with this do you have any
strategies to share as to not coming
across so obviously uninterested and
even sometimes as a blunt insensitive
a-hole to other people
well yeah when I was a monk especially

when I was like a cave dwelling
recluse uh I really did avoid people a
lot of the time people would come to
visit me I just stay hiding in my cave
not wanting to come out and meet with
them I mean it's somebody I didn't know
I had no no interest in meeting these
people sometimes I'd even like pee into
a container just so I wouldn't have to
go outside to go to the
bathroom and just wait until they went
away and also as a monk a lot of the
time I would just see people as as like
stimuli you know somebody standing in
front of you it might as well just be
the image of somebody standing in front

of you on on like a video screen I mean
it was just it was hard to
really just sort of have empathy with
other people because I mean a monk is
supposed to just like deconstruct
everything into just like sensory data
and I was a little too good at that at
times I guess and so really I mean
people would just be like stimuli I mean
I might as well just be dreaming
them but on the other
hand um my years as a monk caused me to
have more
compassion because just trying to be a
perfected Saint as hard as you can for
years and still I mean it doesn't happen
the way it's supposed to happen it

doesn't happen the way you want it to
happen and you just get you're just
stuck being human so that um I have a
lot more compassion for messed up people
now

because I mean they really don't have
much chance or opportunity to improve
themselves significantly even and I mean
especially considering that people who
are trying fulltime to improve
themselves significantly still as a
general rule tend to fail
spectacularly so I do I mean
it's on the one hand I don't really get
attached to people you know just very
rare for me to invite some somebody over

or just want to hang out with somebody
other than my
sweetheart

um you know it's just to that extent I
mean I'm I'm friendly I'm personable
people like me but at the same time I'm
kind of detached and that might bother
them a little bit but at least I engage
you know I have like a certain amount of
empathy with them you know there's
there's a rapport sort of like a um like
a meeting of the minds to some degree
you know I can sort of relate you know
we I can sort of pick up on their Vibe
and you know we can we can connect at a
slightly deeper level than most people
do in some cases but at the same time I

don't really have any attachment to
that uh and as I said uh I do have a
certain amount of sympathy for people I
have more compassion and like Christian
charity towards the average person now
than I did as a human race hating young
man and I really did just pretty much
despise the human race when I was when I
was
younger

so how do I deal with this I mean that's
essentially the case with me it's it's
not as Extreme
as the sakuta here is is laying it out
for himself maybe how do I deal with
this do I have any

strategies um really I mean if if you're just open to another person I mean you're not just closed off against them then I mean there's going to be a certain amount of like you know empathy or or something going back and forth you know a certain connection and just be friendly and polite I mean you realize that if if you're like rude to somebody if you hurt somebody's feelings I mean it's like coming back to you it's it's sort of like an us when you're interacting with somebody you know there's like this entity that isn't us that is involved and hurting others just really hurts yourself so I mean you just kind of feel

into that and you know you're just friendly and polite and you know crack jokes and make people laugh and you know they like you

and I mean you you like them too really

I mean you're not attached I mean you

don't want to invite them over for

dinner or anything but still it's like

um be not so much in your head not be

just sort of closed off so that people

are nothing more than stimuli like like

I was saying when I was a monk um like

especially earlier on as a

monk

um yeah I guess uh just have some

compassion and and try not to be like uh

completely in your head you know try to
be open you know accept that this is
another me really I mean we all call
ourselves by the same name me right it's
all just manifestations of the same
Consciousness so just do your best and
people still think you're an
which I mean some people think I'm an
I assume especially on the
internet you know especially like
leftist Buddhists I mean they just think
I'm like this evil Nazi or something
then I mean it's just the way it is so
oh
well so I guess I'll just move on to the
next question here this is uh from White
Ash

Piper and white ash Piper says Dave you don't feel that World War II is in our midst seems things are getting pretty warm in the old town these days well World War III is it's been in our midst since before I was born you know it's like the cold war you had you had like high military officials and and state ministers and so forth saying that you know nuclear war with Russia is is just inevitable we just don't know exactly when it's going to happen What it's going to happen it's got to happen um you know there's since you know more than 2000 years the world has been coming to an end I mean

you on the internet you can look at lists of you know the world coming to an end these theories these prophecies that just didn't pan out you know I mean 2012 was supposed to be the end you know the Mayan calendar and all that there was the guy who was saying the the Rapture was going to happen in 2011 or something like that he was the same guy that was saying that the world was going to end in

1998 I knew an Australian monk was actually ordering pamphlets and stuff reading about how the world was going to end in

1998 H in the New Testament I think it's the first Epistle of John he says this

is the final hour almost 2,000 years ago
and the Middle East has always been a
war zone I mean Jews and Arabs Jews and
Muslims have been fighting for for
since I don't know since as long as
there have been Jews and
Muslims so yeah I don't
know I mean it could be that World War
III is in our midst but it I mean
potentially it could it could have
happen at any moment during my entire
life so I'm really not that concerned
about it so I'll just move on to White
Ash Piper's next question he says also
have you considered other platforms such
as Odyssey or Rumble so far their free

speech forwards yeah it's I'm just kind of lazy and just going through the trouble of just getting started on rumble or whatever I think I do have an account I think my sweetheart set up an account for me on Rumble but for some reason I just don't upload my videos onto Rumble yet but I suppose I should Rumble sounds pretty good and I think it's U more Progressive so to speak not in the political sense but in the sense of like improving upon itself and just continuing to move forwards and get better and better more so than say bitshoot which uh I I do upload on the bit shoot and I like the platform but still I mean it has issues that it

there's sort of like obstacles to it
really taking
off

so but YouTube I mean it YouTube is
problematic you got to admit I mean
they're they're they're censorious and
they they take a certain political
position and anyone who does not adopt
that political position is is got a
Target on them

essentially so I guess I'll just move on
to the next question and this is from
herie gery man and hery gery man says
weeks ago I had a distressing
psychedelic experience that completely
broke apart any delusions I had about

being able to understand the existence
by my own mental Concepts reality shown
itself to me as an indifferent and
absolutely incomprehensible love crafty
and horror any philosophical idea of
mine turned out to be nothing more than
incoherent fragmented nonsense now I'm
in a state where I feel as if I have
little little footing in conventional
reality I go through the motions of
everyday life I work towards goals I
know on an intellectual level I'm
supposed to reach but still everything
just seems to lack any inherent meaning
is this a skillful or unskillful mental
state
well whether it's skillful or unskillful

depends on your attitude with regard to it like the love crafty and horror part um yeah horror is generally an unskillful mental state I mean it can be sort of a like a a left-handed skillful means towards something something better after the horror subsides I mean the horror can just like jolt you into a better State you know just getting away from the horror something like that but it seems like maybe the love crafty and horror was just during the Psychedelic experience which may have been drug induced and I mean you should take that into consideration too that just because you have a psychedelic

experience doesn't necessarily mean that
it's it's less delusional than the
ordinary waking State of Consciousness I
mean a lot of you know a lot of mentally
ill people have these really intense
more or less psychedelic experiences
that I mean they're just stuck in them
and and they don't get
enlightened but so long as I mean it
seems like one of the main themes of
this state is just that nothing seems to
have any Essence nothing really makes
any inherent sense and if you read read
let's see
the the the Su on the uptaken stick the
atad Su of the suata of Thea waga the
Buddha is talking about his mental

States before he became enlightened and it was it reminds me of this he's saying that you know there was there was no Safe Haven anywhere there's no solid footing anywhere everything seemed to be without Essence without purpose without meaning and then it just sort of caused a kind of SGA or spiritual urgency and alarm that motivated him to practice diligently and he became the Buddha subsequently so it must have helped in his case

so is this a skillful or unskillful mental state it depends on what you do with it I mean if it helps you to detach from some saric

reality I mean if it helps you if it
inspires you to practice to be more
meditative and like you know less stuck
in some sorrow then it's a good thing
but if you just stay kind of lost in
this this state I mean the the distress
you experience would be um
unskillful so it depends on what you do
with it and overall it does seem like it
could be um you know it could be an Open
Door it could potentially be very
beneficial to you in the long
run um I think taking taking psychedelic
drugs has helped a lot of people ROM dos
being a famous example of that
um but it depends on the individual
person and what they do with the strange

disorienting mental States whether it helps them or they just get stuck in this

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

minerals and crave minerals says could you elaborate on why you are expressing doubts about whether a fully enlightened being can exist in a samsaric context well a fully enlightened being is a person who is who is aware of Ultimate Reality and Ultimate Reality is not samsaric and so from a samsaric context this person doesn't really know Ultimate Reality because Ultimate Reality is just

off the scale s Sora nothing Sam saric
can touch it and so
Nirvana and samsar I mean in a way
they're not mutually exclusive like
samsara is the form and Nirvana is the
essence in in a metaphysical at
metaphysical level but at the ethical
level Nirvana or Enlightenment is just
the realization of this this Ultimate
Reality and when you're realizing
something that is completely off the
scale that is not in samsara within the
context of samsara I mean it's just
meaningless so I used to say sometimes I
still say I mean just kind of as a a
thought thought experiment that Satan
assuming that there really is a a Satan

or a devil I mean deep down he'd have to
be an atheist because there's nothing
Beyond samsara to a thoroughly
samsaric like enlightened unwise
being so I mean that's that's
essentially it Enlightenment is just off
the scale of samsara and so samsara
can't touch it and so it would have
really no meaning in a samsaric context
and if you give it samsaric meaning then
you've already missed the boat because
that's not it that's not what it
is
so it's it's fairly straightforward I
think but Nirvana is not on the list of
the 31 planes of existence it's just

completely off the

scale and so Enlightenment likewise by

the same token would be off the scale

because Enlightenment is the realization

of

Nirvana

so you know it's sort of like trying to

understand the content thing in itself

in terms of the content thing as it seems

which I mean it's just futile it's never

going to happen it's never going to come

close to

working so I guess I should might might

as well move on to the next question

here this is from covac and CAD

Zid and CAC and CAD zida says

hypothetically someone makes a system

where a suspect is kept in a room for interrogation the person asking questions doesn't get the answers he wants he informs a higher up the higher up follows a procedure to tell someone else else who pushes a button for the suspect to get tortured by a machine no one in this chain of command knows that what they do is what is going to lead to torture including the the button Pusher the entire thing was made via collaboration of a corporation who doesn't ever get involved in actually torturing torturing someone so they have no volition to kill just putting and planning Machinery together as an

engineering project the government who
buys it knows know what it does but
doesn't get involved in any torturing
but rather hires people to follow
certain steps without them knowing this
will lead to torture in is this a
sensible way to make a Buddhist method
of torture would you would you able to
create a mass death camps in this way
without anyone having any negative karma
in the process hypothetically speaking
of course well I mean obviously the
people at the top know what they're
doing and even this this Corporation
that's engineering torturing devices I
mean it's sort of like the the the
physicists who made the first nuclear

bombs you know it's like they knew what they were making they knew that people were going to get vaporized and irradiated from what they were inventing but they went ahead and did it anyway for the sake of the greater good or whatever or also it kind of reminds me of uh vut novel Kurt Vaga cat's cradle where there's this chemist who invents ice 9 which is a kind of Ice Crystal that crystallizes at room temperature and I mean he does he just he doesn't care that it can destroy life on Earth you know he's just you know he's just kind of autistic and just just purely interested in the scientific the

scientific angle of you know can this be
done can I do this and then it winds up
in you know pretty much everybody in the
world dying because it like this Crystal
of ice 9 falls into the ocean and the
entire ocean freezes
solid and

so I mean he's making Karma he's making
these decisions he knows that it's going
to hurt people I mean he knows that it
can hurt people he does doesn't
care and it's even more the case with
regard to the government setting up this
system and like the the corporation
that's designing the system even if the
the actual grunts that are running the
thing don't even know what they're doing

I mean still you can't have like a concentration camp without somebody knowing that they're running a concentration camp you got to have somebody guarding the place or whatever so yeah it would be you could theoretically say that you know most of the people involved wouldn't know what they were doing but still I mean there were people who would know and even like sensitive people would probably get a Feeling that what they were doing just wasn't quite right somehow and then they just go ahead and do it anyway and then they're making Karma so yeah I don't think there is

really a Buddhist method of like
institutional torture of like criminals
or whatever I just don't think that's
going to happen you're just G to have to
have people that are just willing to
take take the karmic hit and there's
always going to be people willing to do
that

this assuming that for some reason a
Buddhist government sees it as expedient
to torture people you know like for
example you got the terrorist who's got
the bomb planted in an inhabited area
he's the only person who knows where it
is you've got the terrorist in custody
he's not talking so you got to find out
where the bomb is before it blows up so

I mean that is like like an Ethics problem sort of like the trolley car problems you know it's like is it worthwhile is it like morally justifiable to torture this one terrorist in order to prevent 10,000 people from blowing up so it's probably better just to uh have someone willingly take the hit and go through all the trouble of all this double blind processes that really isn't going to work in the long run because obviously there's still going to be people who know what's going on and are calling the shots so I'll just move on to se of action sead Z's next

question which is I was going through the various parts of GC Pond's book on the studies on the origins of Buddhism however the book is from the 1950s and there were many sutas in there that the author put in the unknown category of whether they are early texts or late texts is there any updates on these unknown

sutas and where they would belong I want to be able to make a comprehensive reading of the early texts and be able to differentiate from later ones also you have talked about how some of the sutas from the suon or the oldest do you know if there are any databases of anyone trying to give an

order or range of ordering of sutra Ages
to this level of detail

well I don't think there's any way of
just scientifically quantifying I mean
you can have certain assumptions you
know certain words are later certain
terms are earlier certain trends like
devotionalism and like the the fairy
tale narratives and just stock phrases
that kind of thing would be indicative
of later material just the the the very
elaborate question and answer SU because
would be indicative of later material
that's getting towards commentarial
stuff and then Abhidharma and so forth um
but there's no way of knowing for sure

so it's just different people have
different intuitions different insights
different theories that they're working
with and GC P was wiser and understood
dhama better than the average buddhistic
studies scholar you know he understood
dhama better than say
uh Richard grid and Richard grid wrote a
book you know uh how Buddhism began the
condition Genesis of the early teachings
and it's not as good of a book as Pond's
book even though it was written a few
decades later simply because this kind
of thing it relies more on the wisdom of
the person who's investigating it and
their understanding of dhama at a deep
level not just an intellectual scol you

know like a Scholastic level but deep
down there get

it I think um you know regardless of
whether it was written in the the 1950s
or the 1850s or or whatever that

something written by a person like that
will be better than just following a
buddhistic studies Trend in

Academia um I mean you just got to look
around and if it resonates you know it
just Rings true then you can follow that
I mean if their their arguments make a
lot of sense and so forth

but I don't think there's there's no way
that they're going to be just
crystallizing down the poly toptica to

to get with certainty the oldest text
because it just doesn't work that way
it's it's all going to be educated
guesses so I mean you can just go
through some of the academic literature
you know filter out all the you know why
why Buddhism is is pro homosexuality and
all this like gender studies and and
like uh grievance studies stuff that's
been being injected into buddhistic
studies over the past few decades
especially the past one
decade um and I assume there's still
some really valid um valid scholarship
going on like studies of the sutta pi
and so
forth um yeah it's it's out there I

can't really think of any names off
hand but it's out
there um but I mean it's not going to be
like 100% certain you it's not just
going to be empirical facts you know
these are older these are later because
you can have like later texts that mimic
older texts for example you can have
older texts that just have like later
stuff injected into them that kind of
thing so there's always going to be a
certain amount of
ambiguity so I guess I'll just move on
to COV action cpad Z next
question
which is in your videos of begging in

burmes villages the women covered their head however vinia rules say you can't teach dhama if someone's head is covered in some traditions especially Japanese many nuns also cover their heads even though it's shaved especially older ladies can you explain the significance of covering your head and making head coverings taking head coverings off in these various traditions and cultures and why this practice varies so much I know it was common practice among women in Central Asia and the Middle East before Islam even even in the Middle country where the Buddha taught the Jane tradition has nuns covering their heads as well but vinia makes it seem

disrespectful to cover your head so it's hard to know exactly where and why there are so many different Customs for this seemingly innocuous practice in India and Beyond well it's not disrespectful to cover your head even in ancient Indian culture it's disrespectful to cover your head when you're approaching a teacher or a venerable person or when you're learning dhamma you're supposed to to some degree humble yourself you know to show honor to the teacher or to the dharm and so I mean just covering your head is not disrespectful of anything it's just you should uncover your head I

think I think the Bible or early Christianity also had women were supposed to I guess women were supposed to cover their head when they went to church but the thing about the the videos about me going for alms round in Burma is those those videos were taken in January which was like the coldest time of year in Burma as well as in the temperate zone of of the Northern Hemisphere and so they were just covering their head with a towel or something just to keep their head warm so it wasn't and I wasn't teaching dhama to them and so there's there's no rule at all against that and most of the year they don't cover their head because it's

usually blazing hot in central Burma

instead of relatively

cool you know cool enough that your
breath

vaporizes you can see your breath it

doesn't get that cool very often in

Burma but in January um it does and also

I found that in in central Burma if the

temperature gets below about 80 degrees

Fahrenheit people start layering up you

know they'll be wearing quilted jackets

and so forth

so yeah in this case it was just they

were staying warm because it was winter

time and uh a lot of these traditions of

whether you should cover your head or

uncover your head and so forth It's just arbitrary you know it's just cultural stuff

so yeah it's like the the priest ancient Roman priests at least the high priests were supposed to cover their head with their toga or something when they would be doing the the rituals and so forth but whether you cover your head or uncover it I really don't think the the higher beings really care so it's just mainly a cultural thing and if the culture says it's disrespectful to cover your head then you uncover your head when you know addressing a teacher or listening to to a sermon or something and uh vice versa you know the

culture says the
opposite so I don't know how thoroughly
I answer that question but I'm just
going to move on to seac and zono's next
question which is do you ever have
dreams of being back in the caves and
thinking you going back to America and
being a lay person was all just your
imagination and you need to go back to
practicing well no I don't I don't ever
have dreams like that I mean I still
have a few monk dreams but um I was a
monk for probably 10 years before I was
a monk in most of my dreams even when I
had been a monk for for 10 years and
then sometimes you'd have hybrid dreams

where you're just hanging out with your buddies from college or something and somebody says hey let's go to McDonald's and I'd say okay I got to wrap up first and then you know I'd be a monk and have to like cover both shoulders before we went to

McDonald's I had one memorable dream where I was I was a monk at the time when I had the dream and I I was stealing car stereos there was like some kind of like some kind of festival or something going on in a park and there was all these Park cars and I was just going to the cars just stealing stuff and then I just wake up and I think ah I'm par of gica and I'm thinking I could

I can put it all back but it's already too late because you've already taken it so you're already excommunicated and then finally you just realize oh it's just a dream okay I'm fine you know I've had parica dreams before like sex dreams that kind of thing where man I just excommunicated myself and then I realized oh wait it's just a dream I remember one time I was I was still in the dream it was close to elusive dream where I'm eating dinner or something which is against the rules for Monk and then uh I think oh this is against the rules I can't be doing this and and then I had a lucid enough moment that that I

realized oh this is just a dream I can
just still keep eating this so I did and
there's a dog snoring behind me right
now okay

so yeah I still have dreams of being a
monk but very very rarely maybe once
every few months and none of it is
including everything being my
imagination and I'm just still a monk
and didn't really go back to America I
mean I'm not aware of believing that I
went back to America and then thinking
that that didn't happen and when I was a
kid my parents got divorced when I was
nine and there was a few years
afterwards where I would have these like
fantasies where I just wake up one day

and and I'd still be nine before they
got divorced and everything would be
back the way it was again but um nothing
like that has happened to me with regard
to dis robing that I can think of that I
can remember so I'll just move on to the
next question from covac and CAD

Z after taking a sip of my
beverage and uh this this question is
biku wrote a paper on non-duality in
Buddhist teachings can you please do an
analysis of it and he left the link but
the thing is I really don't like reading
biku bod very much sometimes he's
actually kind of
depressing and I think I might have read

this years

ago because I do vaguely remember

reading biku bod writing about

nonduality but it was very dry and kind

of a I don't think he really endorsed

non-duality I think he might have been

trying to refute the idea that the

Buddha was teaching non-duality because

he really is sort of the Scholastic type

he doesn't meditate much if at all and

he really likes all of the complicated

philosophical

system but again I mean I didn't read

the the article that covac and CAD Z not

included in the link and I warn people

in advance I mean I people are sending

me like YouTube links and like links to

like essays and articles and so forth
sometimes they'll send me entire books
and less than half the time while I
actually watch the video or read the
book I mean I just sometimes I just get
swamped with it and sometimes it's just
stuff that I'm just not really
interested in any way uh sometimes it
turns out to be really interesting but
um in this case I was not inspired to
read buku body's article but um I do
think think that he really doesn't get
non
non-dualism I just don't think that he
gets
it so if you want to know about

non-duality in the Buddhist teachings
you probably do well to read somebody
else's take on it and so I'll just move
on to the next question here this is
from Tigger formerly known as hey it's
TIG and Tigger says in your opinion how
was the chai too pagota in Burma
built and for those of you who are un
familiar with the chaio
pagod it's this little pagot that's on
top of a boulder and the boulder is just
balanced on this Rocky Crag and one
person can even Rock the boulder back
and forth but it's still stable enough
that it it's doesn't fall off and
somebody at some point got the idea
let's build up a Goa on top of this

wobbly Boulder on that's balanced on
this

crack and so they did and I assume the
way they did is the way they build just
about any small pagoda just using bricks
and mortar you got like the Masons up
there on top of the Boulder and uh I
mean the way it's I've been told I've
never been to Chitto myself I've seen
lots of pictures of it of course but um
I've been told that the the pagoda on
top of the boulder actually helps to
balance the boulder I mean it's sort of
it you know makes the center of gravity
farther away from the whole Boulder just
falling off this this crack that is

balanced on so I mean the real question is how did the how did the boulder get balanced on top of the Crag to begin with and uh the Burmese traditional explanation is that it's some wizard did it but I I really can't say um if a wizard did put the boulder there and who knows maybe the the Wizard had the pagoda built too shortly after balancing the boulder the huge bould Boulder on top of this crack but uh I don't know if anyone really knows that uh maybe Western scholarship could figure it out you get like archaeologists there trying to figure it out but I mean they might violate some

taboo by scratching the gold the gold
leaf stuck onto the boulder or the
burmes just don't want to know what the
Western opinion is because they're
content with their wizard

Theory I mean that happens

so I mean how it was built I mean it was
built fairly easily and

straightforwardly you know you just
climb up onto this big boulder and

buildt this little brick pagota there

but how the boulder got balanced there
is the real question and but that

question was not asked and I'm not going
to go any farther with it than I already
did and I'm just going to move on to the

next question which is from Liber

Lam I assume that's how you pronounce it

I don't know how to pronounce some of

these names so Liber lamb says what were

the most most interesting experiences

you had as a

freelance monk before you ordained I

can't remember the exact word you used

in your book but like trying to do the

monk thing without a

s well I mean I never was a freelance

monk before I ordained I considered it

you know I considered you know when I

was trying to figure out how I was going

to renounce the world and live a

spiritual life you know I considered

becoming a Zen monk I even briefly

considered becoming a carthusian catholic monk who takes a vow of silence and then thereby doesn't have to tell anyone that he's not really a Christian it was a dumb idea I mean you at least have to make confession to a father Confessor or something I

assume um I consider just making a wool robe and getting myself a wooden bowl and just hitting the road but I knew myself well enough to know that I mean having a pre-established system that would help me to behave myself you know all these rules and so forth and like senior senior authority figures kind of helping to to guide you and so forth

that that would definitely be easier and more likely for me to have some kind of success than if I

just do it on my own but on the other hand I have been a freelance monk after I

ordained like probably at least half the time I was a monk I was living alone out in a forest

or um living like the only Monk at a monastery or just being the senior monk

where I didn't have to I mean I just didn't have to take orders from anybody

other than just what are in the texts

you know like the vinea rules and so

forth so yeah I have been a freelance

monk um the most ex interesting

experiences man I've had lots of
experiences as a freelance monk but but
that was after I Ade while I actually
was a monk and just avoiding the S
because um most Asian monks really I
mean I've I've talked about this before
it's like maybe two% are really trying
to be conscientious monks living in
accordance with the texts the other
98% have got their have got other
reasons for why they became monks you
various reasons and they're just you
know at best just trying to make some
progress and and and sort of making an
investment for their next existence
which presumably will be better and

they'll be able to practice dham better
or at least they'll get into heaven with
the Herm of celestial nymphs or
something so I just tend to avoid
monasteries like most monasteries in the
west and in the East literally it's
against the rules of monastic discipline
even to set foot on the property because
of this thing called nissia where I mean
I was talking about this I think it was
in the previous Q&A where the the rules
are so strict that if you make use of
anything that another Monk has paid for
then you're committing an
offense and I mean it even goes so far
as I give this
example which is in the commentaries a

monk buys a mango with his own money
eats the mango throws the pit on the
ground that pit sprouts and grows into a
tree 100 years later a different monk
sits in the shade of that tree and that
different monk is breaking a rule
because he is making use of something
that are among bought with money and so
since almost every Monastery in the East
and in the west has had monks like
contributing to the to buying the
property endorsing checks and so forth
that I mean it's all theia and so the
way to avoid that uh is you just avoid
monasteries you avoid other monks as a
general rule and I did that for many

years there was a famous Italian monk
who lived in in Burma who also he just
famously he just went everywhere on foot
he walked all the way to India and back
he did the pilgrimage on foot to India
and back to Burma again and he just did
not stay in monasteries he just avoided
monasteries avoided monks because he was
strict and most monks aren't and you
it's just you can get you can break
rules just by interacting with monks who
who are

unconscientious so with regard to the
most interesting
experiences

I mean it just man it would just be sort
of an arbitrary choice I I've had a lot

of interesting experiences like the time
I got attacked by ogres or the time that
um I made a a raft out of two inner
tubes and some bamboo and a little bit
of teak planking and went down pone
Creek after the monsoon hit where it was
like Rapids and uh then came out on the
chindwin river and and that was that was
an interesting trip that was that was an
interesting
experience um but it could be that uh my
attempts to be a freelance monk were in
the west I
mean I mean I wouldn't know where to
begin all all these weird experiences
I've had and um so and like probably at

least half of the weird experiences I've had as a freelance monk

um I mean they they occurred when I was being a freelance monk I mean these weird experiences like half my life as a monk was freelance essentially just avoiding other monks and monasteries as a general rule as much as I was able so I I'm I'm I guess I'm just not going to answer that question what were the most interesting experiences because I mean just take your pick I mean I've had so many interesting experiences and most of those times were when I was just a solitary monk avoiding like monasticism in general just avoiding Monas

Aries so I guess I'll just move on to
lib Lamb's next question I apologize to
lib lamb for not giving some juicy
experiences but uh I
really I mean it's just like picking him
out of a hat or something it's it's
where do I
begin so nebr Lam's next question do you
think God as a name derives power from
ancient mythology like with the ancient
Canaanite mythology of L or is more of
something that gains power through
Living spirit like people praying to God
in the context of modern Doctrine well I
don't know how the word God as a name
derives power from ancient mythology

since in ancient times they weren't

using the Modern English word

God so I mean I is not the same word as

God

so I think the the word god as a name

derives power just from all the people

especially now who believe in God you

know who attribute really profound

significance to God who are praying to

God who are swearing by God you know

it's

just it's just this living belief this

living tradition which gives the word

god

power

um and I mean also the cultural stuff

which is you know rooted in the past has

an effect also I mean people today
wouldn't believe in God if there wasn't
like a a theistic tradition going back
uh into ancient times so I mean that
there is some power in the past also but
um like L the Canaanite god l i mean
he's most modern Christians are like
oblivious I mean they're just almost
totally ignorant of you know Jehovah
God's origins or at least partial
origins in the Canaanite king of Gods
L but there's another question about L
which is this next one so the next
question from libr Lam is do you think
that the development of something like
the mythology of L is relevant to the

spiritual life of modern-day Jews

Christians and Muslims even though it is

heretical to all three like the UTA waga

is to Buddhists something that sort of

sets the record straight on how they got

to the metaphysical assumptions and

mythology that they currently

use um I don't think it's relevant to

the spiritual life of modern day Jews

Christians and Muslims to the extent

that they are oblivious to it most

modern day Jews Christians and

Muslims really don't know the evolution

of the concept of the monotheistic God I

mean like like the uh the question above

was referring to you know the the

monotheistic God probably I I mean for

the abrahamic religions probably began with

El that was the god of Abraham I guess and he was he was God to all the Canaanites most of them and he was like the king of Gods he had a female consort I don't remember the name of the goddess who was El's consort and then around the time of Moses

presumably El got conflated with Yahweh who was like a an Edomite or midianite um like a war god the god of hosts the god of armies and so I think El just sort of got sucked into to Yahweh I think Yahweh became like the main god of the the

Israelites and then I mean
there some of the tribes at least
probably spent some time in Egypt and
they got some Egyptian ideas mixed in
and then you know eventually there was
the Babylonian captivity which which is
when the Jews became monotheists pretty
much or so it seems I mean before that
it was just that Yahweh or the Lord you
know whatever whatever name they were
going to go by because they couldn't
really call him by his real name because
that was you get stoned to death for
saying Yahweh I
guess like in the Life of Brian the guy
who's going to get stoned for saying
this piece of pablit is good enough for

Jehovah and he's going to eat Stone to death for that

so man I'm I'm just kind of wandering all over with this

one but I mean most people they I mean the the ancient Evolution and origins of their spiritual system are largely irrelevant because all that really matters is what they're in now you know how they are feeling now what they are told now and what they know or think they know

now and so ancient stuff with with regard to you know how abrahamic monotheism arose or you know how early Buddhism arose for that matter I mean

for me it was important to know just
because I wanted if I was going to be a
Buddhist I wanted to know and try to
follow what the historical Buddha you
know the original enlightened founder of
the system taught and so you have to do
some detective work to get closer to
understanding what he originally taught
for for abrahamic
monotheists is not nearly so important
because there was no real well I guess
there was I mean the Christians kind of
they had their founder in Jesus of
Nazareth although he was a reformer
pretty much of a pre-existing tradition
Muhammad is a little more
complicated um with regard to that but I

mean understanding the origin of Allah
you know because I mean there was the
the Pagan the Pagan Arabs they were
worshiping Allah too it's just he was
sort of like Jehovah or Yahweh started
out is just sort of like the patron God
of of this

tribe but I mean you don't have to know
that stuff in fact I think to a
faith-based

religionist that actually knowing the
nuts and bolts of how your religion
arose would probably be damaging to
their faith you know they've got this
idealized

Faith you know that it's all just

divinely inspired and so forth so
ignorance would be Bliss to that extent
I
guess so I'm I'm make sure I'm actually
answering the question here instead of
just rambling do you think that the
development of something like the
mythology of L is relevant to the
spiritual life of modern day Jews
Christians and Muslims even though it's
heretical to all three well only to
those who really take an interest in
that and bother to learn about it and
they're going to be more philosophically
oriented and less Faith oriented and uh
they're probably going to be relatively
lukewarm as a consequence

anyway

so

yeah yeah I think that it probably uh
most it's just not an issue for most
religious people in the west because
they're just oblivious to it for the
most part so I'll just move on to the
next question which is from harim
cthul and harim cthul says do you prefer
to live among white people which is
actually kind of an interesting question
I don't think anyone's everever asked me
that
before
and it's I mean there's Nuance to it
it's not just a plain yes or no question

I think to the extent that I do prefer to live among white people is because I can communicate with white people because I'm white and I was born and raised in a predominantly white culture so that when I was living in Burma for example I lived in Burma for more than 20 years I can appreciate that Burmese people in certain respects are superior to the average Western person you know they they've got a certain like depth to them and and they got more dham in their lives and they just have certain virtues come naturally to them you know they're very modest virt people as a general rule I mean there are always going to be exceptions including especially in the

government but uh there's Al always this culture barrier that even if you know the words of their language and the grammar and everything still there's this barrier in between really communicating because you just don't think like a Burmese person does and so there's always this separation in other cultures that I mean there's there's going to be separation anywhere but it's less separation Liv Living in America among fellow native Americans then there is living in a foreign culture that you're you're just sort of transplanted into so that would be the main thing it's not any kind of

racial issue so much as it's a cultural issue and that I was just raised in a more or less European culture and I can communicate with more or less European people more deeply you know I can just resonate with them you know we can be on the same page easier than living in a in a foreign culture that you know is just very foreign like Burmese people it's like they'll ask me a question how long has it been and I have no idea what they're referring to but the Burmese it's just they know they understand each other so that the Burmese language is really kind of almost like abbreviated because like half of each sentence that you say in Burmese is just

inferred and the other person because
they're they're burmes too they're
thinking along the same lines as you so
you just have to just give these little
signs to kind of steer their
understanding of what you're saying and
they're able to communicate because it's
just so traditional and the way they
think is so similar that just giving
little hints as to what you mean and
they they just follow the hints and it
works for them but for a western person
someone ask me how long has it been I'll
say how long has what been and they'll
say yes and I'll say again like how long
has what been and they say yes sir it's

like how do you communicate like that I
it's also um especially when I first got
to

Burma there was I didn't realize that
there's really no word for hello or
goodbye in burmes so I mean there's like
Mingalaba which is like this very formal
way of saying hello to in a in a formal
way but most people don't say it at
least not when they're just meeting
somebody on the street or whatever so
that you say Hello by asking a stupid
question or you know you meet on the
street it's like where are you going or
if it's around lunchtime have you have
you eaten lunch yet or and just
something like this and it used to

really bug me it's like sometimes it was just this really obvious question I'd be walking back from the village with my alms bowl and some Monk would say you coming back from from alms round and it's like what impression do you get look it I got my full Bowl I'm walking back to the monastery and they would get embarrassed you know because I mean that's just how they say hello but it's this this cultural thing in between that just prevented us from really sinking you know like s y n c not s i n k and so yeah I mean I prefer to live among white people mainly to the extent that I'm able to

communicate better and just sort
of interact more fully with people who
have been raised in the same kind of
culture as me have a lot of the same U
assumptions or just sort of um what's
the word associations as me so that we
think more similarly and so you can you
can have a more satisfying conversation
or interpersonal
interaction so I guess I'll just move on
to the next question this is from
disin and I apologize to Zin because his
name reminds me of Dr so much you know
like like the snitches you know everyone
knows you can't teach a to
zch so I do apologize for that it's just
you reminds me this name reminds me of

Dr Seuss but it could be like you know

Bob or something in in

h in some European

culture but anyways T says greetings

poasa have you ever been interested in

Islamic philosophy people like I Sina Al

gazali IB rash IUN Etc some of these

were responsible for bringing Aristotle

and some other Greeks to the West during

the

Reconquista a lot of stuff was being

translated from Arabic and people like

aquinas owed their interest in Aristotle

to people like ibben rash who wrote an

extensive amount of commentaries some of

which are now only available in Latin

and extinct in Arabic well I've never been particularly interested in Islamic philosophy I've read a few biographies of Muhammad including what's her name Karen

Armstrong's biography of Muhammad I've read an English translation of the Quran um I wanted to read like The Penguin version and like an old penguin translation that had it in chronological order like the the order that Scholars assume Muhammad actually um produced these suras but um by the time I ordered the penguin edition of the Quran um they had gone back to just the traditional ordering so as not to offend anybody I guess so I've read a little bit

about uh

Islam but I mean I'm I'm not

particularly interested in it

so yeah so I mean I I've read the Quran

I've read biographies of Muhammad I've

read some stuff about you know the early

years of Islam and so forth but um I've

never really had any great interest in

it um even

Sufism I think he he mentioned Sufism a

little later but um in a different

question but uh Sufism is was partly

inspired by

Buddhism and uh even even so I still not

particularly interested in uh Sufism it

just it just seems like it's got too

much baggage or too much sort of
Deadwood in a way stuff that really um
sort of gets in the way of spirituality
I I assume there have been some very
profoundly wise Muslim philosophers but
um I don't know I just I just have never
really resonated with that or been much
interested in that and uh most Islam
does not strike me as particularly
wise so I guess I'll just move on to
taz's next question here do you
personally find Aristotle or Plato more
insightful and meaningful even though
Sufi thought is neoplatonist a lot of
Arabic thinkers have preferred Aristotle
and even went as far as to almost
disregard Plato labeling him as merely

Bell letters I don't know how to
pronounce that word I wouldn't I would
have written more but I understand this
message is already huge as is have a
nice day P basa and anyone listening
well thank you

toin and I again I do apologize for the
fact that your name reminds me of Dr
Seuss but uh the question here do I
personally find Aristotle or Plato more
insightful and meaningful really neither
I have never been impressed by either
Plato or Aristotle there's a saying that
everyone whether they realize it or not
is a disciple of Plato or Aristotle but
really I'm I have little use if any use

for either like Plato I got no use for the idea of universals you know Plato had this idea that like a dog has this inherent dogness and up in this up in Plato's Heaven there's like the ideal dog that you know all dogs partake of this essence of pure perfect dogness up in heaven and I mean that's just I I just cannot buy that but Aristotle I mean I think Aristotle um he made a more important contribution to western culture than Plato did Plato to some degree I mean he helped bring about Christianity since um early Christianity was profoundly influenced by platonism and some of the earliest um Christian Mystics for example were

neoplatonists who converted to Christianity like the pseudo dionysius who probably had little choice but to convert to Christianity because back in those days if you didn't convert to Christianity you were pretty much a criminal

so let's see Sufi thought his neoplatonist yeah it was strongly influenced by Buddhism and to some degree Hinduism also but I'm not exactly sure of the history like the early history of Sufism exactly where it arose but there are definitely some uh buddhistic elements in it but um yeah I mean if I had to pick one or

the other that'd be a tough choice I
mean Aristotle I mean at least he came
up with logic he had he had some
profound like political thought I mean
Plato's Republic I mean that's just I
mean that's just
fascism but
um Aristotle yeah I think Aristotle may
have been more useful as a philosopher
I'm not exactly sure what Plato
contributed other than just messing up
subsequent philosophers like
schopenhauer I think the weakest aspect
of schopenhauer's philosophy is what he
gets from Plato like he schopenhauer
believed in universals for
example

so yeah I mean Aristotle just completely bungled stuff like astronomy he just didn't understand astronomy or much of physics at all you me he tried but he just didn't get it but in a way he sort of set the groundwork for subsequent like uh scientific um endeavors and so forth and uh yeah I mean Plato gave rise to neoplatonism I mean indirectly I I really not so sure that Plato himself was as profound a thinker as someone like

plotinus but at least he indirectly um led to like a profound mystical like uh tradition in Western culture up until the intolerant hysteria

of early Christianity just drove it into
Extinction well after like cannibalizing
parts of

it so yeah I'm not sure I mean I really
don't particularly like Aristotle or
Plato but I think I would find more of
use in Aristotle like his discussion of
you know like politics for example and
just his coming up with formal logic
I mean that was that was very valuable
so I think Aristotle would take the
prize of most important with regard to
benefit to Western Society just just
from coming up with formal
logic but uh Plato definitely has had a
it's hard to say who has had a stronger
influence on the west just because of

Plato's profound influence on early
Christianity and and just the New
Testament so and even uh even like some
a lot of Jewish thought I mean the early
Christians were Jews who were neop or
platonists of some
sort platinized

Jews so I guess I'll just move on to
next question

here and this is from the arus swasti
project and the ARA swasti project says
if someone claims to be enlightened how
can that be verified by others unless
they are enlightened too also is
conventional truth necessary to consider
on the path to Enlightenment and if not

why is it not important so this is this
is a second question I got to separate
these questions all right first question
if someone claims to be enlightened how
can that be verified by others unless
they are enlightened too I mean you
can't verify you can't know for sure and
like I was saying I've said it many
times full Enlightenment may not even
really mean anything valid in a ssar
context that within a ssar context there
are no enlightened
beings and uh it may be that whether
somebody else is enlightened depends on
how enlightened you are that within your
own like your own view they're not going
to be any wiser than you are necessarily

because you can't imagine anything wiser than you in a sense I mean you can think someone's wiser than you you know they can behave much more calmly and and you know they may they may seem to make wrong choices less than you they may be happier than you but still you can't really understand what's going on in the mind of someone who is wiser than you or more advanced than you are because you're limited by your own limitations of

advancement and it's like hang says in the platform Sutra of H I mean when you become enlightened you look around you realize everyone else is enlightened too

whereas if you're a fool you look around
you're just going to see
fools so there is that but with regard
to how can you at least hope to get some
handle on like someone's claiming to be
enlightened I mean how can you do
something at least to like verify that
to some degree I mean there are ways
especially like I'm reminded of
something that St Francis of Assisi said
and that is you don't really know
somebody until you see them when
everything goes wrong you know when
people that are supposed to be on their
side suddenly turn against them what do
they do and if if they like they seem to
be calm and and like well balanced and

everything when everything is going good
but then if something bad happens they
just freak out or go into a rage or
something then you know you know they
still got issues they have they're not
they're not really all that wise yet
because even like the most vicious dog
in the world it can seem completely calm
when it's just lying on the grass
looking at balls or whatever you know it
can just seem completely calm you know
but really it's got its vicious streak
it's got its vicious anuus its
underlying

Tendencies and uh so so I mean like a
con man can can appear to be really wise

I assume a lot of cult leaders pass themselves off as enlightened beings when really they're just Rascals who are good at passing themselves off as as enlightened beings I think one danger sign is people who brag about how enlightened they are I could name a few names but those of you who watch these videos probably could name a few names also just people who just brag about how enlightened they are um that's one reason why I am skeptical of the sutas in which the Buddha is bragging about how enlightened he is because I just do not think that an enlightened being is going to be boastful that he's going to be like a narcissist or an egomaniac and

just

brag so I mean there is that but really I think what St Francis of Assisi said is you you don't really know somebody until you see them when the is hitting the fan everything's going wrong when everything that's supposed to be going right suddenly just goes south you know that then you get a better idea as to how really wise another person is but for the most part you you can't be sure you can't really know how wise another person is you can get some you mean you can kind of hypothesize you know you can make educated guesses but it's really hard to

say so I guess I'll just move on to the second part of the ARA swasi projects question here also is conventional truth necessary to consider on the path to Enlightenment and if not why it not important um yeah I mean it's like just because a person knows Ultimate Reality doesn't mean that they're going to know all the you know like quantum theory and how to speak Han Chinese and how many hairs everybody has on their head you know they're not going to be omniscient in a samsaric sense you know there's still going to be human beings in the samsaric sense so conventional truth I mean one of the most important things to to like

logic and rational thought is as a
detector you're never going to
arrive at ultimate truth through logic
or rationality but you can shoot down a
lot of just absurd theories you
know at least it can help you to weed
out the

and that's really about the
best thing that it's good for other than
just navigating s sorry I mean you've
got tax forms to fill out you got
something that you got to assemble
following instructions then it helps to
be have some rational thinking but uh
with regard to
Enlightenment the best use of just

worldly knowledge is skepticism and just
being able to detect faulty arguments
and just
arguments

so let's see I want to make sure that I
answer this question more or less
adequately is conventional truth
necessary to consider on the path to
Enlightenment certain conventional
truths are necessary especially at first
just like right view which is you know
if you do good Good's going to come back
if you do bad bad's going to come back
you know what goes around comes around
you know there is karma
that there is a certain basis to
morality there's a certain Basics like

that that are going to be skillful means
that are going to help like point you
and move you in the right
direction it's it's the raft made of
rubbish and then once you cross the
flood you don't need that raft anymore
and you can just cut it
loose but certain amount of conventional
truth is necessary just to help guide
you on the path to Enlightenment even
though um you know ultimately it's it's
a a raft made of rubbish that you you're
not going to need after you become LED
unless you got still got tax forms to
fill out or
something so I hope that answered the

question so I'm going to move on to the next one which is from the anti-marxist league and the anti-marxist league says on the subject of eclecticism wouldn't it be better to keep things as Bare Bones as possible the more one adds to their eclectic views the more views one has this approach seems like the opposite of the teaching in the ATA waga the same of course could be said for adopting every aspect of a single tradition I'm not condemning either approach but it seems like one should keep things keep such things to a minimum and yeah I mean eclecticism can be good or bad just as just being single-mindedly dedicated to one

tradition and not having any interest in other Traditions that also can be good or bad um one of the advantages of eclecticism is that uh I mean you become bahut and and even the Buddha in the text says you should be familiar with other points of view you know you should be familiar with a broad spectrum of of attitudes and points of view just so I mean somebody who's born and raised into a tradition and they don't want to know anything about other Traditions that's all wrong view you know it's like a Jehovah's Witness here her always trying to hand out you know like pamphlets or literature of their own system but you

try to hand them like a Buddhist
pamphlet here take a look at this
they'll just recoil as as though you're
trying to hand them a snake and that
helps to guarantee that they're going to
be locked into this very limited point
of view So to that extent eclecticism is
definitely to one's

Advantage um but still what the
anti-marxist league says is true that I
mean you don't want your mind just
cluttered up with all this information
when really all this worldly information
is not it's not the same as
Enlightenment and if you want to
understand ultimate truth go along with
what St John of the Cross says which is

in order to know all things seek to know
nothing which is I mean you're not going
to understand Ultimate Reality by
thinking about it so the eclecticism
again can be used as a kind of
detector and just you can help you to
triangulate like you've got a number of
wisdom Traditions like you take the
wisest
spiritual systems in
existence and what do they have in
common I mean that would
be um kind of a good hypothesis at least
kind of make it more likely that those
aspects are are more true and I'm going
to close the door because my sweetheart

just came

home

I like rolling in

chairs

so where was I

yeah yeah most people just cannot follow

the AA waga I mean AA waga says have no

view have no perceptions have no beliefs

and that's very

Advanced that's I mean only a fully

enlightened being can probably fully

manage

that

so yeah I mean it is good not to just

feel in your mind up with all this

information that you take seriously and

consider to be true and unless you have

the wisdom to know that it's just
provisionally

true gosh but yeah I mean eclecticism
has its Advantage especially for Western
people I mean most western people that
are spiritually inclined or
philosophically inclined they're just
not narrow-minded enough to just adopt
one system and just like be dedicated
only to that system and just ignore or
reject everything else that works for
people in pre-modern societies it works
for people in like Buddhist Burma for
example um but for a westner like me it
just it just wouldn't work I mean I want
to know what old traditions say and so I

at least don't know what I'm rejecting
you know you even if you're not a
Christian it's it's useful to read the
Bible just so that you'll know what it
is that you rejecting by not being a
Christian so it's like why I read the
Quran for

example so yeah it can go both ways I
mean it depends on whether you you
manage it skillfully or not you know
it's not just the outward action that uh
determines whether an action is skillful
or unskillful is the accompanying mental
States and you can two people can do
exactly the same thing one's got
wholesome mental States the other one's
got UNH wholesome mental

States so

yeah it's just whatever works best for
you whatever is most successful in
causing you to be detached and Serene
and like clear

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

enchanter and Tim the enchanter says

let's say there is no such thing as

Enlightenment what would you guess those
experiences were then of the budha and

the like delusion hallucinations brain

malfunction from chronic sleep and food
deprivation

the question is just hypothetical well

if there's no such thing as

Enlightenment then somebody like goab

Buddha he was his experiences were as

close as you're going to get to

Enlightenment which is probably not what

Tim the enchanter was thinking but that

I think that's essentially it it's like

even if there is no perfection in this

imperfect world that still some people

are closer to the ideal of perfection

than others

and the ones that are considered to be

enlightened are the people who are

closest to that

or yeah I guess there wouldn't be an War

because there is no

Enlightenment

so that that would that would be my

answer to that because I really find it
difficult to believe that I mean there's
there's no such thing as
wisdom or or like

Insight yeah I mean there there
obviously is is and so you just say well
I mean people that are considered to be
enlightened or declared to be
enlightened are people who have gotten
farther along the Route towards
perfection even though Perfection may
not be attainable in this in this life
like Christianity most Christians will
say or at least most knowledgeable
Christians will say that you cannot
become perfect in this world you cannot

become totally perfect ever because the
the highest thing you can hope for is
the beatific Vision you never merge with
God you just are able to get close to
God maybe see God in
heaven and that's that's
it so but still just because they say
you can't attain Perfection it doesn't
mean that you know everybody's just
hopeless you know there there some
people are better off than
others so I don't know if I answer that
one so I'm just is going to answer Tim
the enchanter's next question or at
least attempt oh this is a fairly easy
one so I I'll answer this one for sure
and his question is have you ever had

muscle spasms from the lack of magnesium
and potassium living largely on rice in
Burma and doing walking meditation and
sweating a lot no the only time I ever
got cramps I never had muscle spasms
where it's like other than cramps

I mean there had been times when I was
meditating when I'd be like jerking and
twitching but that would be like PT
which is something entirely different
from what he's talking about here but
the only time I ever had cramps partly
sometimes you just sit wrong you know
you get like a leg cramp or something
but mostly it would be um if I went up
into the hills during the cold season

and just the cold weather would cause me to get leg cramps but I never really had like um like cramps or muscle SP spasms from lack of electrolytes until I came to here to South Carolina and started working in like 90°

warehouses and um then I would get weird cramps and stuff sometimes I still do just I mean not now because the weather's cooling down but when the weather is hot I think there might be electrolyte loss involved in uh just getting weird cramps like during hot weather so I guess I answered that question so I'll just move on to Tim the enchanter's next question which is what would you say evil is who would the true

evil person be assuming we do not have a
lot of free will well I I like
schopenhauer's take on evil where
schopenhauer was saying that like a
completely ruthless Cutthroat kind of
person like some business executive
who's willing to just walk over the
backs of anyone who gets in his way
that he's not really evil I mean he's
ruthless and selfish and foolish but
he's not flat out evil that according to
schopenhauer evil comes from
enjoying other people's
suffering that you enjoy hurting others
so somebody like tiberious Caesar or
chairman Mao who allegedly enjoyed

watching people getting tortured to death that would be evil especially if they're the one who ordered the person to be tortured in the first place so yeah someone who enjoys hurting others who like derives pleasure from some perverted kind of inferior pleasure from um The Suffering of others I think that would be what evil would be just taking people as far away from from happiness as they can and just enjoying that

so yeah so I'll just move on next question here and this this person has the interesting name of MinGa which is a kind of Burmese noodle soup that's really good that's I kind of almost Miss

MinGa uh so I assume this person is either Burmese or they've spent time in Burma or at least been exposed to Burmese culture in order to know what MinGa is but if you ever go to Burma try the MinGa it's good

anyways MinGa says long videos covering many subjects would really appreciate timestamps any of your subscribers willing to make them sometimes people on YouTube make timestamps but MinGa was watching me on bitshoot and thus far I don't have enough viewers on bitshoot for any of them to be inspired to do timestamps so uh sometimes on the YouTube videos somebody will come in and

do time stamps but uh not every time so
I guess the best you can do is you just
go through the questions um I always
have the questions include section below
the video and uh you can just sort of
estimate how far through the video the
question is

and unless you want to make timestamps
if MinGa wants to make time stamps

that's fine too so I'll just move on to
the next question this is from Don or
Don like like the Spanish

Dome I'm not sure which and this also is
the very last question so this is the
last question of the show and Don or Don
says Dear poob basa how does one square
the circle of the teaching of no soul

and the hundreds or thousands of
near-death experiences are near-death
experience testimonies that say I found
myself floating above my body but it was
still me and then they go on in Spirit
to have various Heavenly or hellish
experiences and also including the whole
concept of astral projection does this
not refute the concept of anata what are
your thoughts well anata is not really
no soul it is no self at all so
according to the doctrine of
anata I don't exist even now it's not
saying it's not just saying uh oh the
battery's running de just a
second I forgot to plug the computer in

again I do that so many
times just second here all
right okay so I mean anat doesn't
literally mean no soul it means no self
so even I as a person regardless of
whether I have an eternal soul I don't
exist in reality I don't have an
inherent self essence and if you can if
you can believe that you exist as an
individual um like in a in the meat the
meat puppet or whatever then I mean the
the being that's floating above you know
the the accident victim or the drowning
the near drowning victim or whatever and
is going up towards the light and
meeting with the spirit guide in this
Heaven realm I mean you can be just as

as deluded with regard to that so just
because you do astral traveling that is
not proof that you have a self because
even you sitting there in your own body
doesn't prove that you have a self that
you have an individual mind or at least
you think you have an individual mind
you still don't have a self mean you do
not have a distinct ultimately real
individuality that
ultimately that difference is papancha
it's just a kind of delusion separating
the world up into this this and that
it's all part of of delusion
essentially so it's like you've got this
infinite

possibilities in in SAR let's say
infinite possibilities and some of those
possibilities are just like an aspect of
Consciousness BEC so convoluted and
reflexive that it starts thinking that
it's separate from everything else but
it's not and that's where the delusion
of self comes from and the the delusion
of soul that you've got an individual
Eternal Soul is just like a higher it's
like a projection from the idea that
you're having a distinct individual
existence now even just in a in a meat
body but you don't I mean at least not
according to Buddhist
philosophy although there are some
Buddhists especially Western ones who

just vehemently vehemently sometimes
angrily insist that they have an
internal soul but I mean I think they're
they're just missing the whole idea that
I mean the whole idea is that there is
no ultimately real self Essence to
anything that that everything is just
conditional that you're as much a
product of the surrounding context as
anything
else that I mean it's like your essence
is no different from the essence of
anything else
really so that's that's what an is about
and uh like near-death experiences and
and astral traveling and so forth

doesn't change that anymore than
everybody apparently having their own
distinct individual meat and body and
their own mind that is oblivious to the
minds of others around them it's
apparently closed off
self-contained
and individually distinct But ultimately
that is all
illusion so I hope I answered that and
that's it I'm done I'm done answering
for for this evening or whatever time of
day you happen to watch
this and if you have any questions
you're very welcome to ask them I cannot
absolutely guarantee that I'll be able
to answer them and if you send me links

to articles or YouTube videos or
somewhat some such

I do not absolutely guarantee that I'll
take the trouble of watching them
because I get so many anyway and other
reasons I guess but if you have
questions about Buddhism philosophy
meditation monasticism me personally
whatever feel free to include them in
the comments below and check out the URL
links I think my archaic neap punch. org
website is now defunct but it's going to
be improved and uh renewed eventually
preferably probably within the next few
months and uh be
happy

hello and welcome to episode 66 of
question and answer I am your host poo
bose1 and this will very likely be the
last episode that I do in this room I
mean I used to be facing that way and
then you'd look this way and now I'm
facing this way and you're looking this
way but it been the same room for over a
year but this is probably last episode
because we are moving to a different
house that has a different room in it
and this is my
beverage and we've got the more or less
usual amount of good questions and so
I'm going to commence to answering these
questions I'm fixing to start commencing

at any

rate excuse me and the first question is from dawn or D because the the the second name after that looks like it could be Spanish so it could be dum but anyways Don or Don says you mentioned old monks going scile I'm surprised by this would not a lifetime of meditation and training the mind to be the absolute best preventative medicine against senility and this is kind of a an innocent naive kind of question because most monks do not dedicate their life to meditation and training the mind like in Burma most monks are either just easygoing Village priests or else they are scholar monks there really aren't a

lot of monks who are just dedicated to actually following the sutas and vinia so I mean there is that it's most of them they don't meditate much at all or a lot of burm or Asian monks don't meditate very much so it's kind of a I don't know I mean it wouldn't prevent someone from going seile if they just don't meditate they just read lots of scriptures do a lot of chanting that kind of a thing but also I think to some degree from a Buddhist point of view senility is uh I mean it could be like a karmic thing or just going with modern science it could be largely genetic or

you know they just got too many vaccines
or or shots of this or that nature that
messed up their system somehow or they
just got their their brain cooked by
malaria one too many times who knows so
yes there are plenty of scile old Asian
monks so I'll just move on to the next
question this is from Zeno

demon I think I think that's it Zeno
demon and Zeno demon says what kind of
question would you recommend for someone
that wants to ask a question but doesn't
know what to ask so that's I mean that's
like the question that's the mother of
all questions isn't

it and it's it's kind of a good question
because I mean I have had people come to

me before like even like when I was a
monk and they say I don't even know what
to ask

but uh I mean just like what is the
essence of dhama or what is the essence
of Buddhism I mean if if you want to ask
questions about Buddhism or even like
who was the Buddha I mean that would be
like a good beginning level you know
just you know this foundational kind of
question and you could build from there
I

suppose so I'll just move on to the next
question this is from
yugao and yugao says in in the Samu Kaya
there is a suta on how should mendicant

experience five scas with their
Consciousness now fifth scanda being
Consciousness also are these two types
of it and I'm really not sure of what
what suta in particular yugao is
referring to it really does not spring
to mind but so he says how a mendicant
should experience the five condas in
poly it's condas not scas sconda being
the the Sanskrit equivalent with their
Consciousness experienced five scas with
their Consciousness now the Fifth's gone
to being Consciousness also it could
just be bad logic or bad system I mean
there's a lot of that in the
texts that I mean it's just not a very
they're not very good at being

systematic even though they try really hard like in Abid dama and the commentaries they're just trying to just go full blast systematic and still it doesn't work out very well just like the five condas according to tr like

Orthodox

tradition you've got pretty sure it's 52 mental States in according to Abid dama there's 52 different ultimately real discreet mental States

and um let's see let's see what is it way ionda is one of those mental States it's feeling feeling is one of these 52 ultimately real mental States and sonaka is perception which is another one of

these and that

um H

saraka is the remaining

50 and I mean it's not very systematic

is it you just single out two from this

group of 52 and then the whole remaining

50 are just lumped in to to another

condom it's just not very systematic and

if you read the text you're going to see

this it's

premodern attempts at logic and and just

being systematic and as I've said before

formal logic really hadn't reached India

at the time that the polych were

composed you know there was sort of a

protol logic you know as it wasn't fully

formed yet and so you get a lot of

attempts at being completely just
rational objective and logical and
systematic and it doesn't always work so
my guess would be that this example that
yugao here is bringing up would be one
of those because I'm not sure how you
could experience the five condas with
their Consciousness which includes
Consciousness itself unless I mean
that's

just the I mean the five condas with
with conscious with with Consciousness I
mean that would that would make sense
because you got five cond as one of them
being consciousness but I'm really not
sure what the exact words are of the

suta I'm not sure exactly what suta he's referring to

so

um yeah so I maybe it's just bad reasoning or maybe either Yuga or I just doesn't quite understand what's being said in the text I certainly don't

because I don't even know what text he's referring to so with all due respects to yugu maybe he could clarify a little and maybe I could uh make a better stab at it I'll just move on to a white ash

Piper and white ash Piper asked me to ask Otto what tobacco he likes because it turns out that white ash Piper is referring to a guy who smokes a white ash pipe apparently maybe White Ash is a

kind of wood his pipe is made out of
white ash I all this time I was thinking
that he like played the Pan Flute or
something but he didn't he
doesn't so I asked Otto Just today what
tobacco he likes and he says he smoke he
mostly smokes M I got it written down
here M Baron's HH old dark fired ready
rubbed pipe tobacco often but not always
with a pinch of laka Andor Peri to add
flavor and it just turns out here on my
phone I've looked up the uh the link
that he uh he provided Auto did and it's
right here the HH old dark fired you
know and love from M Baron in a more
convenient ready rubbed form bold flakes

of dark fired burleys balanced with flucured virginas have been broken up into fine ribbons since this tobacco was hot pressed into flakes before being rubbed out the robust earthy flavor of the dark fired Kentucky still shines through in the taste promising a deeply satisfying smoke indeed

I hope that doesn't qualify as like a commercial but Auto also likes gawi with Hogarth and Company's dark Bird's eye pipe tobacco sometimes it's more of a summer smoke and a shag

cut so I'll just move on to the next question here this is from Trust wet farts and Trust wet farts he brings up an issue that is brought up quite a lot

actually by Western Buddhists or Western people who are interest interested in Buddhism and that is he says isn't there very bad karma for eating meat or having milk milk is worse Karma than meat for many reasons other than it is full of blood and pus and makes me congested and sick and as it turns out I'm drinking milk right now I don't detect any blood or pus at all in this which is good so anyway um yeah and like I point out the Buddha himself ate meat Jesus of Nazareth ate meat you know the Disciples

of the Buddha ate meat they they weren't required to like there is the story

David dat who is like the Buddhist Judas es scariot who's trying to take over the songa and one thing he does is he's he's he tries to form lasa by making it

stricter because the Buddhist monks even though they might be outrageously strict by modern Western standards in Ancient

India they were seen pretty much as

Slackers you know they could wear shoes

if they wanted to they could use a

sunshade they could use a walking stick

which caused a lot of the really strict

just extremely aesthetic type of

Aesthetics in the Buddhist time like The

Janes and the aicas to consider the

monks just to be shaving even headed

householders she even headed

Layman but uh anyway David data tried to

make it mandatory to be vegetarian and

the Buddha said no if you want to be

vegetarian you can it's not

required and uh even the Mahayana texts

if if they bother to read their text

they would

see that in the mahayan vinas and

there's several of them there is in the

ptim rules or in Sanskrit the pratim

Moka

rules rules saying that for example a

monk is not allowed to ask for good or

dainty food which includes meat and

dairy products meat fish milk curd that
sort of thing unless he is sick or has
been given prior permission to ask so
the implication clearly is that monks
were allowed to eat meat Buddhists were
allowed to eat meat you just weren't
allowed to kill it yourself or monks
weren't allowed to eat monk that they
eat eat meat that they knew was killed
for their sake or even if they suspected
that it was killed for their sake still
they shouldn't eat it but if it's just
leftovers or whatever or I mean the deed
is already done it's already dead no
problem also with regard to dairy
products there is at least one sutra where
the Buddha is praising cows I

think he is uh he's like talking against animal sacrifice and and apparently in his time the usual animal that was sacrificed was a cow or cattle some sort and he's saying you know they're such benefactors not only do they do they give us the benefits of their labor when they're pulling plows or carts or that sort of thing but also they provide us with dairy products so I mean it is true you have to take the the calf away from its mama in order to get more milk out of it that sort of thing but um really you got to use insecticides even to to grow plants it's just killing is unavoidable and so at least you want to

not be like directly instigating
it but no it is not very bad karma for
eating meat or consuming dairy products
it's just Rupa it's just matter you're
eating it as food you don't have any bad
intentions because karma is in attention
karma is your mental state not what
you're actually doing and a lot of
people a lot of Buddhists even really do
not understand this fundamental
principle of Buddhist philosophy or
Buddhist ethics and that is that whether
something is good or bad karma depends
on your mental States not on the action
that you are
performing so two people can do exactly
the same thing one person is getting

good karma for it another person's
getting bad karma for it and like some
Western person with a utilitarian ethic
who's thinking oh this is bad for me to
do this like eating meat or drinking
milk or whatever oh I'm a bad person for
doing this and then they're eating it or
drinking it then they're getting bad
karma because of the mental States not
because of the eating meat or the
drinking milk so you got to be careful
about that sort of thing thoughts are
much more powerful than most people
realize so I'll just move on to trust
wet farts say next question here which
is sort of a followup it was sort of a

long kind of a discourse going on but there's another question in that which is is it possible that even Saints or Buddhas make mistakes and he's implying here that maybe the Buddha was mistaken in not forbidding the eating of meat and it is true that Saints or Buddhas can make mistakes for example there's one case in the rules of monastic discipline that I have brought up more than once to other monks in Burma because it's it's a good indication that the Buddha wasn't as omniscient as devout Asian Buddhists would like to believe where he just knew everything or at least everything that he wanted to

know there is u a story in the rules of
Manas discipline about how monks were
getting sick in the afternoon or they
were they were sick and they couldn't
eat or drink anything in the afternoon
because monks are restricted to only eat
in the morning and so so the Buddha made
it allowable for them to eat medicinal
substances there the five tonics which
are let's see if I can remember this
let's see there's butter there's ghee
there's honey molasses and oil like
usually sesame oil that was like the
Standard Oil of ancient India at the
time at least in Northern
India so butter

ghee honey molasses which would include
like sugar or palm sugar
and mostly vegetable oil although you
can have like lard or like some kind of
animal fat also that's allowable
although dolphin fat is
forbidden so no wait I think dolphin fat
might actually be allowed but I think it
might be like a felony in in the United
States to uh consume marine
mammals but then again the gtic dolphin
was not Marine it lived in a river so we
we just just set that aside and uh oh
yeah making mistakes so the Buddha
allowed monks
oh no I'm I'm just confused I'm telling
you a bad story this is a wrong story he

allowed monks to do something oh they
they were allowed to take the medicinal
substances that I just named but only in
the morning and according to the text it
made the monks even sicker so then he
said all right you can take the
medicines in the afternoon also and then
they got better but it seems as though
the Buddha made a mistake because you
know he he made this allowance or this
kind of a decree you know this Rule and
it just made them sicker instead of
helping them get better which would seem
to be a mistake wouldn't
it so it is possible for Saints or
Buddhist to make mistakes but that's

with regard to like worldly stuff like
with regard to what medicine to take
maybe you know with regard to like
Advanced mathematic problems I'm sure
they could get they could calculate
something in their head wrong you know
there's certain I mean they're not
absolutely omniscient but with regard to
simple ethics on how to you know how to
become enlightened how to make spiritual
progress you I think they can be trusted
to know right from
wrong so the Buddha can make mistakes or
Saints can make mistakes but generally
with regard to knowing right from wrong
I think they're reliable with regard to
other things medicine mathematics that

kind of thing they might make mistakes but with regard to just knowing right from wrong I think they can be trusted so I'll just move on to the next question here this is from Joe do and I do apologize for getting my my story there kind of confused next question from Joe do how much water do you drink a day well sometimes I don't drink any water at least not in its pure form I do like to do lute my water down with flavorings and so forth but it depends on how hot it is if it's I'm living in South Carolina you know the Deep South it gets really hot

in the summertime with high humidity and I'm sweating like the proverbial aab and so I could drink a gallon a day easy but during the winter time when I'm not sweating so much I don't need to drink as much and I might drink you know at least a quart I do drink a lot my my system requires a lot of FL fluids just to uh keep things regular so to speak but there were times in Burma I could drink three gallons a day and still be dehydrated you know it's just just pouring with sweat it was so hot so I mean it depends on the weather but um I remember reading in a an old army survival manual I used to read survival manuals when I was was I was a younger

man and it was saying you should always
drink enough that your urine is
colorless you know if it looks yellow
you should drink more because it's just
good for your health good for your
system to drink a lot of water and in a
really hot climate you can start getting
like kidney stones or or something if if
you're always got like this
concentrated um urine in your
bladder

so but while I'm on the subject of U
Army survival manuals I think that same
manual had it was just classic it was
how to kill a beaver with your bare
hands you know in order to eat it

because you're surviving you're out there in the Wilds of of Russia probably somewhere in Europe anyway surviving and so what you do I mean I'm not recommending that anyone actually do this but what you do is you kick a hole in the Beaver Dam and then you stand over the hole and when the beaver comes to fix the dam you grab it by the tail and you jump up on land and you start swinging around a circle and as soon as it starts to relax you bash it against a tree and actually in Army surv United States Army survival manuals it actually gave those instructions on how to kill a beaver with your bare hands although you're probably better off using a knife

or

something but again I'm not s I'm not
recommending that anybody kill large
aquatic

rodents so I'll just move on to the next
question here also from from Jo do and
this is uh really taking aack from uh
how much water I drink this is uh this
is going a very different direction and
that is if you could ask one question to
the Buddha what would you ask that's a
good question and I think if I were
confronted with the Buddha the one
question I would have to ask is what
should I

do I think that would probably be the

best question to ask I I read in ajn
mun's biography how ajn mun actually met
with the Buddha because he was meeting
with Buddhas like not just Goa Buddha he
was meeting with all kinds of
Buddhas and um he asked go him a Buddha
he he asked he could asked one question
and the question he asked was about what
is the proper color for Monk's
robes well he didn't have to ask what
should he do I guess because he was
enlightened already or some
such but yeah I think what should I do
that was that would be the best question
I could ask so I'll just move to the
next question here this is from the
overg

giver and The overg Giver

says what are your thoughts on religious debates and have you been interested in participating in them to defend the dhama from otherw World Views or Traditions like Christian Islamic or Hindu

well in the AA waga

there is a suta the pasura suta that is really I mean it very strongly advises monks not to engage in debates you know you're supposed to have no view no position so what's the point of debating it just causes antagonism conflict it you know it just makes problems it's it's just not really a dharmic path but

I'm not entirely dharmic I suppose in that I do engage in debates like in comment sections like like bright Bart comments I was Eng engaged in a long debate in in Breitbart just over Evolution you know it wasn't really wasn't really a religious debate although sometimes people will just tell me you know that because I'm a Buddhist I'm a a demon worshipper or something and then I'll have to set them straight on that but um let's see my thoughts on religious debates is I mean Technic speaking they are discouraged in the Buddhist texts but it is kind of enjoyable it's kind of invigorating you know and also one of

the reasons why Indian philosophy became as strong and as subtle and profound as it was is because the different sects the different schools the different religions were actually debating with each other it was just a tradition in Ancient India that you would have religious debates and it would strengthen the positions you know if you're position is too weak to stand up to an allout attack I mean it's really not worth keeping and so you fortify your position by you know even borrowing ideas from the other side if necessary so I mean it's not all bad and I do I I am relatively good at debating

I

think so um there was there's been a couple people that tried to get me on a YouTube channel called modern day debate and one time one of the organizers actually contacted me and he wanted me to participate in a debate but he wanted me to argue for the existence of a soul which was like the exact opposite of the Buddhist position and so I told him I mean yeah I could argue against that but then again you got so many materialistic atheists arguing against the soul that they don't need a a Buddhist to argue against it and I think it would be too obscure for two Buddhists to debate on whether the Buddha taught an eternal

Soul or not that would be a good debate and I um I have kind of put it out there that I would be willing to engage in a debate over whether in Buddhism there is an eternal Soul or not because there are a lot of Buddhists especially Western ones I never met an Asian Buddhist who endorsed this so although I assume they're out there but some Western Buddhists just vly sometimes angrily insist that the Buddha taught an eternal soul and the evidence for that in the text is practically nil at least in the terraa Buddhist text the oldest Buddhist text but then again they'll say no Mah Buddha taught

Mahayana and then it was you know it was hidden because it was too advanced for hundreds of years and etc etc so let's try and get back to the question here because I've almost forgotten it myself oh yeah what are your thoughts on religious debates and have you been interested in participating in them I would be willing if it were like a a relatively if not a friendly debate at least like a a polite one you know a civil debate yeah I mean I'd do that I think I'd be good at it too but I mean yeah I think the the main one would be like debating with a Buddhist who actually believes that Buddhism teaches

that there's an eternal soul that would be a that would be a hot one there would be sparks flying Maybe on that one but uh yeah I could debate with a Christian I wouldn't want to debate with a Muslim so much because you know you don't know what the consequences of that'll be Hindus yeah I mean if if anyone wants to set me up with a worthy adversary then we can put it on the on the channel I can uh I can do a debate so I think up for now though I'll just move on to the next question here and this one's from Fred and I have to admit I don't fully understand on this question Fred says if you boil

everything down to face the nimitta
screen what else could there
be and I'm not sure what he means by
boiling everything down to face the Nita
screen um boiling I I assume he's
meaning meaning that if you just stop
creating nitas which are Nita literally
means a sign and it's essentially a
synonym for perception unless he's
talking about meditation there's also a
nimitta in meditation which is
symptomatic of access
concentration um which is like right
before first Jan you're supposed to
enter into this access concentration in
which you will see a nimitta which is
usually just like a a white or light

gray kind of circle or oval although
sometimes you can see the Buddha sitting
in meditation or some such that's also a
nimitta um it's not discussed in the text
in fact that the texts say like the
ancient polyas say you should be
striving for animita which is no the
signless the signless concentration I
mean you should not be cooking up
perceptions and and stuff to focus on
you you should be eliminating mental
States until you get down to just bare
Consciousness although the texts don't
use that terminology exactly
so I mean if you boil everything down to
face the nimitta screen which I assume

means you just stop thinking or you just
eliminate perceptions from your mind

what else could there

be um then that that reminds me of St

John on the cross and his dark Faith

where he's saying that you know um I

mean he would have made a great Buddhist

really he would have St John of the

Cross he was a father Confessor to a

bunch of contemplatives and so he was

essentially doing meditation

interviews and he was he would give them

the instructions that whatever is not

God just dismiss it from your mind so

you cannot understand God intellectually

the intellect is out you cannot

understand God emotionally the emotions

are out you cannot sense the presence of
God with your five senses sensory data
is out I mean you just get rid of
essentially all mental States and then
he says that it's not just empty there's
still something there and that's
something there is like the all
pervasive spirit of
God and a Buddhist of course wouldn't
use that
terminology but uh I mean you you get
down to like Ultimate Reality or as
close to Ultimate Reality as you can get
just just bare formless undifferentiated
Consciousness or like J Krishna Mur he
says undifferentiated awareness although

um I think he might have used that in
somewhat different
context so considering that I don't
fully understand the
question um I think that might be a good
enough answer for now unless he can uh
clarify a little so I'll just move on to
Fred's next
question which is if you take a hard
look at the jump to nibbana how could it
not be nihilism if there is no sense
basis there is no experience at all
what's your
thoughts well again
um from a worldly point of view nibana
would be a kind of
annihilationism in a sense even though

an enlightened

being hasn't just poofed out of

existence he's still

there

so I guess you can just fall back on the

beginning of hegel's dialectic and his

logic where he starts off with pure

being that's the thesis the antithesis

is pure non-being and then be they they

cancel each other out because neither

one of them has any kind of discernable

content and so they just merge into one

there's no difference between pure being

pure

non-being and then you have to have as

the um synthesis you have to have

contrast you have to be able to contrast
being from non-being and then and then
you have like the 10,000 Things D teing
talks about you have the phenomenal
world so nothing is everything I mean
zero is infinity in a in a spiritual
sense a metaphysical sense if you
will so if you take a hard look at the
jump to nibana how could it not be nism
from a purely worldly point of view then
it could be ni it could be seen as
nihilism but it's more mysticism than
nihilism so but then again to a
completely worldly intellectual point of
view mysticism is just meaningless
[__] because they just don't get
it so you're going to have to experience

it for yourself and then then you'll
know I'll just move on to the next
question this is from Monsour
coolwhip and Monsour coolwhip says is
music fundamentally sensuality does this
apply to both consuming and producing
music which he means by playing music
can the discip can the discipline of
playing an instrument have similarities
to First jna for example NADA yoga in
the yoga tradition NADA yoga is the
process of uniting the individual mind
with Cosmic Consciousness through the
flow of sound if I am aspiring for
enlightenment should I give up all
engagement in music or is there a

possibility of skillful means wholesome
distraction from defilements developed
concentration at Etc I was surprised to
find that biku bod plays the piano and I
thought this was against the vinia or
even a precepts yeah well um technically
it is against vinia for a monk to even
touch a musical instrument there's a
list of things a monk isn't even allowed
to touch that includes gold and silver
or anything else considered to be money
musical instruments weapons women the
like the uh the ornaments or clothing of
women

um raw

grain and uh probably a few more that
I'm not thinking of right now um but

bbot is is not a strict practitioner
he's more of a a scholar than an actual
like a serious dedicated
practitioner as far as I can
tell so so much for biku body let's get
up to the top here is music
fundamentally ESS sensuality and from a
Buddhist point of view
which is pretty much an an or from a
terraa Buddhist point of view which is
essentially an ancient North Indian
Point of View yes music and sensuality
you shouldn't do it like if you you keep
eight precepts that includes playing
music monks aren't allowed to go listen
to music they're not allowed to make

effort to listen to music I mean if you go to the grocery store and it's playing some kind of you know music in then that's fine I mean if you just happen to go somewhere and music is playing it's not against the rules you shouldn't go there in order to listen to the music

so like terab Buddhism is very uncompromising and saying that music is sensuality and if you're really serious about becoming enlightened you shouldn't do

it um but that is an ancient Indian take and I

mean terab Buddhism does not have a monopoly on

enlightenment so it could be that there are other systems that are more musical like Hinduism for example I mean it might just be like repetitive chanting with like a few instruments in the background just chanting um but even even in terava of Buddhism it's against the rules even to chant in a sing song voice I mean you're just supposed to have like this like conversational tone while you're you're reciting texts so even that much music is is technically forbidden in terab of Buddhism oh there's a dog snoring behind me I was wondering what that noise was so let's see

here so if you really want to
incorporate music into a spiritual
practice and it can be a kind of
meditation even though it might not get
you into Janna just you know it's sort
of a and some people play the guitar as
a kind of meditation you know Qui Chan K
Kan played the flute in the old kung fu
Series so I don't think that it's evil I
don't think anyone's going to go to hell
necessarily for for playing music
although I'm sure quite a few rock stars
could manage it based on their lifestyle
more than just based on the sounds
coming out of their
instruments
um so yeah I mean it's a choice you have

to make I mean if you want to be a
Buddhist and a musician you're gonna
have to just accept that Terra Buddhism
doesn't approve of it but then again
Terra Buddhism really adopts this it
just inherited this very strict anti-
sensualism monic tradition of
prehistoric India Northern
India so yeah I mean you might want to
consider Hinduism or I mean even even
like some Mahayana Buddhists I mean they
got some kind of music you know at least
at like bod GAA you got like the there
was some Mahayana Temple where they're
just like Wang on this big drum all the
time it was just

constant I think the Tibetan the Tibetan
Buddhists have at least some kind of
musical chanting that they do besides
the weird throat singing
stuff so yeah I mean biku body really is
not a good role model for how a Buddhist
should behave himself but
uh even so
technically according to terado Buddhism
You music is uh it's just wallowing in
sensuality so I think I think some early
Christians might have had a similar
approach so I'll just move on to next
question and this is from
Mambo and Mambo says is there no self if
there is no self and it's just five
Aggregates then how does it play out in

next birth since the five Aggregates
have changed well I mean the five
Aggregates are changing just constantly
every moment they're changing and really
what passes on the only thing that
passes on from One Life to the next
according to Orthodox Terra is your
karma which is volition it's it's saraka
it's just the it's like your Vol
volitional stream you know it's like
it's sort of like a river it's got this
momentum to it or like a flame or
something and when it dies out here it's
sort of like conservation of energy or
something it's just got to reappear
immediately somewhere else this this

same

momentum and it's just the momentum of
your your force of existence your stream
of

Consciousness and uh yeah it's always
changing it doesn't stay the same which
that's why there's no self or Eternal
Soul in Buddhism

because it's just changing like a flame
or a stream of water or

something so I think I'll just Mo move

on to Mambo's next question here did

Buddha really see his past lives or are

jota Tales just Moral Stories to guide

Society I just see I just feel a lot of

it is just belief of people with

pre-buddhist ideas in the S who attach

these ideas later on well I mean in the time there were there were definitely um religious sects that believed in rebirth I mean it was is still sort of an innovation in Hinduism and I'm not entirely sure that you know the Proto Hindus you know the the vadic brahmanist the vadists that uh they really even a belief in rebirth had gone mainstream there yet I mean the the very early viic tradition there's I mean they don't talk about Karma and rebirth in the old like the rig Veda is I mean there might be some later stuff that was added but I mean what are agreed upon as the

earliest vadic texts there's there's no mention of of rebirth it it it kind of entered the stream of of Proto Hinduism with the

upanishad but with regard to the first part of this question did Buddha really see his past lives or are jica Tales just Moral Stories to guide Society

I would say both that the Buddha really did see his past lives but the jota tales are just completely different the jota tales

are first of all they're relatively late you know they didn't arise until after the Buddhist Lifetime and a lot of them are like standard Hindu folklore that just got buddhis dized you know it's

like once upon a time you know when
bramadat was ruling in binaris that's
how a lot of them start
um you know it's sort of it's sort of
like asps fables a lot of them you know
like talking animals and so
forth and so the jica tales really don't
have much to do with whether the Buddha
really saw his past lives or
not wouldn't surprise me at all if the
Buddha really did see his past
lives but the jota
stories are essentially like the pet
Tantra or asap's fables or whatever that
are
just full stories that just had a little

Buddhism added at the beginning and a little Buddhism added at the end you know sort of a Buddhist moral and you know it just became a kind of Buddhist literature

so yeah I do rebirth is uh yeah I whether the Buddha actually taught or not I mean if he was just sticking strictly to the OA waga version of early Buddhism where he's just saying have no beliefs no perceptions no view you know no

position then you know he might not have mentioned it and then just the the pervasive belief of it in that culture at least that subculture just you know infiltrated or it could be that that the

Buddha really did talk about past lives
and I mean the sutas definitely support
that so I mean there's people
nowadays or you know modern times who
claim to remember their past lives my
father claimed to remember some of his
past

lives and he remembered a lot of it
relatively vividly especially one
lifetime where he was a Scotsman back in
like the late 1700s named Jason

hll so I me people like ROM Doss they
just say you know rebirth is is not a
theory I mean it's just a fact I mean he
had no doubt whatsoever and his teacher
maharaji nimoli B I mean you would just

talk about you know in your previous
life you were this and that and you know
it was just accepted as a matter of
course so people wiser than I am have
accepted reincarnation although people
wiser than I am uh have also rejected it
I

suppose so just take your pick I guess
it doesn't really matter just be in be
here

now and don't worry about it

okay so I think I'll just move on the
next question here this is from
creel checking make sure that I'm
actually

recording and I am which is

good and creel says how do I measure my

progress towards Enlightenment according to strict terava philosophy and according to you well that's a good question and it does mention in the text you know what are good sign of making progress It's like you have fewer desires fewer attachments you know that would be a good one just more contentment in your life just more peace of mind as in general although the Peace of Mind one isn't necessarily good because you could be going through hell just as a necessary catharsis to get you to the next stage so I mean if the [__] hits the fan and you're not freaking out as bad as

you used to when the [_] would hit the fan then that would be a good sign but uh yeah I think just more Detachment more equinity fewer desires fewer attachments that that would be a good indication that you are making progress and that's according to Terra philosophy and me personally we have to agree on that so I'll just move on to the next question from the wisest and humble Guru who has had several names at this point and the wisest and humble Guru says wonder if you've ever been laughed at for being a Buddhist monk um yeah there was a a few a few times even in Burma

where you go to

rangon it's uh you know it's a the

biggest city by far in all of Burma and

you've got like some rich kid maybe he's

a general son or something in like a

white BMW and he'll just laugh at

because he's so sure that like this you

know spiritual death is is somehow

preferable but yeah I've had people mock

me and ridicule me a lot when I'd go to

when I came to America and especially

when I was not living in a monastery

when I was like 2011 2012 I was trying

to just be like a like a Freer range

monk living in Bellingham Washington

Pacific Northwest of the United States

near the Canadian border and
yeah I just be like walking around town
wearing my brown toga and Barefoot and
you know people would just sort of make
Wise Cracks and grin or I had one guy
just just angrily just chew me out in a
grocery store he was just pissed off
just because I was a Buddhist monk I
mean he he was just going at it and at
it and at it and then like finally like
5 10 minutes later I'm at the checkout
stand the same guy comes by and he's
just like going out it again and uh I
mean what do you do it's just that's one
reason why monks have to be 20 years old
at the time of the ordination because
even in Ancient India you know it wasn't

universally Buddhist back then either there was plenty of non- Buddhists who would be hostile to Buddhist monks and you had to be at least 20 years old in order to have the maturity to deal with this verbal abuse being hurled at you by non- Buddhists and anti-

Buddhists so yeah I have been laughed at a little bit although most people really have treated me well you know that's one advantage to America becoming woke as they say or it's yeah it's one of the advantage of America becoming more liberal and inclusive and all that is that a monk can walk down the street wearing a brown toga with a shaved head

and bare feet and most people won't even
look at him twice you know some people
will even be friendlier to you just
because it's like politically correct
and be friendly to
Weirdos

um

so yeah so I just move on to the wisest
humble Gus next question here oh I was
just going to add that I mean you could
walk down the street in a lot of America
just you can be a guy can be walking
down the street like wearing like a
black velvet evening gown and nobody
will look at
twice so the wisest humble gurus next
question how to not care if someone is

laughing at us well I mean I've just
sort of had a kind of invisible armor to
that um pretty much my whole life you
know some people are so preoccupied with
other people's opinions you know
especially you know the the um
stereotypical housewife who's always
worried about what the neighbors are
going to think you know it's like I've
just I'm just practically immune to that
by Nature I was just kind of born that
way apparently so someone can laugh at
me I mean I know me better than they
know me as a general rule they're just
like ignorant ass hats anyway so their
opinion is valueless to me I mean it can

be somewhat interesting as an
anthropological study but I mean their
opinion is essentially worthless and so
I don't really care if some fool is
laughing at
me

so I'll just move on the next question
here I don't know if there's a how to
not care it just in my case it just it
just never

happened so I mean if there's a girl you
like in in high school who laughs at you
that's that's

different so I'll just move on to the
wisest humble gurus next question here
are Buddhist monks supposed to defend
their faith to or from others or just be

silent and walk

away well it depends um if someone comes to you in good faith and they're making arguments against Buddhism and you can in good faith defend your defend

Buddhism but if someone is just being blatantly disrespectful it's actually against the rules for a monk to try to teach them anything so if someone is just like sneering and mocking which happens a lot in like Breitbart comment sections or other comment sections which are even worse some comment sections are just

toxic then uh yeah I mean you don't you don't even engage in that or at least

you're not supposed to a monk
isn't um so are Buddhist monks supposed
to defend their
faith from others or just be silent and
walk away it depends on the attitude of
the other I mean if they're in good
faith they're being sincere here and
they're not being hostile you know
they're not sneering and mocking then
yeah you can speak in defense of
Buddhism and you might actually help
them you know the Buddha was did that
numerous times he'd engage in Friendly
debates with non- Buddhists and as a
general rule in the sutas they would
convert to Buddhism as a
result um but if someone is just really

being just hostile the correct thing to do according to Orthodox terraa is just be silent and walk away so the next question is from Indian guy and Indian guy says if the majority of people think God or gods are dead even if they believe in God which is kind of strange if everything is made up of all of our thoughts collectively and subjectively do you think it's possible that we in our Karma or in the Dharma have killed gods and goddesses and or they are dead due to the karma that changes I'm not a fan of n by the way or to be honest but I sometimes think that he might have channeled the truth when

he said God is dead well if everything
is made up of all of our thoughts
collectively and subjectively then if
the gods existed then they would also
have

thoughts uh collectively and
subjectively but I think the only gods
that would die without people believing
in them would be what pagans call
egregor and that an egregor is a being
that exists because of the people that
believe in it you know it's like they're
adding a little bit of their
Consciousness to this this sort of
centralized entity you know everybody is
like contributing in a sense some of
their belief that it exists which is

like creating this pool of belief and
Consciousness that is actually
manifesting some being that might be
more powerful than any of the individual
Believers and some kinds of pagan gods
or even maybe more than pagan gods you
know like even some monotheistic kind of
gods might actually be of that sort
where um their
existence depends on the belief of their
followers now and and that would be
called an
egregor um
but if they if there was like a being
let's say you got a human being who
lives a virtuous and magnanimous life

and then after death he becomes a higher kind of being you know as just due to his Good Karma then it doesn't matter if anyone believes him or not I mean most people on Earth are oblivious to most of the higher beings that exist in this universe so there is that also but uh with regard to something like Apollo or Athena um yeah it's really hard to say I mean nowadays we would just say that you know if they existed at all if they weren't just myths then they were egregor but who knows there could be some kind of beings that for some reason you know they want offerings from humans

and if they don't get them I mean they might just move on to some other world or something some other version of reality or or they they could I don't know so it would depend on what kind of beings they were I mean if they really were like a being in the same sense that we are beings where we've got you know subjective experience and so forth you know a kind of objective experience also then yeah I think just the fact that um religions based on them die out doesn't mean that they're necessarily going to die although they might just leave in disgust or something but a being whose existence

depends from the beginning on others
believing in him like the egregor that I
mentioned then yeah they could actually
just sort of Fade Out cease to
exist if you read
uh U Lord of the Flies by William
Golding the novel don't forget the
movies but you see that Satan according
to the novel Satan or the devil really
does exist but he's a kind of egregor
you know it's just like this dark place
in everybody's mind sort of contributes
to create this thing that takes on a
kind of existence of its
own but I think I'll just move on to the
next question
here this is from the anti-marxist

league and the anti-marxist league says
can you recommend a basic Canon of
Buddhist text for a Westerner you point
out that the goods of the an no the
goals of the anaga I I need to wipe my
glasses you might see me gawking or like
making faces at the screen more than
usual because my glasses are kind of
smeared and blurry right
now so anyways I'll just start over here
the anti-marxist league says can you
recommend a basic Canon of Buddhist text
for a Westerner you point out that the
goals of the Tica loga no views no
perceptions are very Advanced which
certainly seems to be the case what

might be some basic and intermediate texts before the ATA waga and would you have some other Advanced text to recommend alongside the ATA waga um I've already mentioned what I consider to be some of the oldest texts which are getting closest to um getting closer to the Buddha himself which is Thea waga you got the parayana waga which comes right after the aaka waga and the sutin but just take away the the weird introductory stuff uh some other sutas of the suata um you've got like the central non- mythological portion of the Saka sua of the digik Kaya you've got the uh

Daka Su of the Maj minaya you got a
number of sutas in the udana including
the Bahia suta

um so I mean those are like Advanced
profound kind of um sutas there's a lot
in the the sutin Kaya that you have to
kind of search

for um I mean they're they're throughout
the Tex you just have to search for them
um with regard to like a good

introductory Buddhist text for a

beginner like a newcomer to Buddhism the
suata is good the udana is good and also
the majima is good I mean you're

inevitably going to come across stuff

that just seems like Deadwood to you or

it's just all this mythology stuff that
you can't swallow as a as a Westerner
with more or less eclectic point of view
um but still I mean you just kind of
have to kind of weigh through it a bit
but yeah I would I would recommend as
like beginning reading in the the
original or the early text suata udana
and like the majaya would be a good good
good way of picking up on Basics you
know just a strong foundation in just
basic terab Buddhist
philosophy maybe uh the sagata waga of
the the Samu Kaya which is like the
first the first section of the sutin
Naya also has got a lot of profound
stuff in

him so I think I'll just move on the
next question here this is from the Arya
swasti project and the ARA swasti
project says greetings poo did you think
do you think the concept of Karma is
taken too literally or too far by some I
can understand that rebirth is not the
same body or even the same personality
but rather a volition of past and
current actions habits Etc but to think
that every little bad or good thing that
happens to an individual is a result of
some distant past action that just seems
absurd your
thoughts well everything that happens to
us is not necessarily the result of some

distant past action in fact from the
terava Buddhist point of view the
Orthodox Buddhist point of view nothing
is really the result of some distant
past action because the past no longer
exists all that exists in Orthodox
terraa is the present moment sort of
like eart TOA talking about the Power of
Now or ramda saying be here now karma is
now and so it's like you're dreaming you
you're not fully awake the Buddha is
fully awake that's the the word Buddha
means awakened so we're we're like in
this dream world we're not fully fully
awake yet we're not fully conscious yet
and so We're Dreaming the stuff that's
happening to us so to

Speak and

so some of us just aren't very good

drivers of our uh astral vehicle so to

Speak but really I am not a materialist

I do not think that this material world

is ultimately real that we are in a kind

of dream or like a matrix or

something I don't think that we're in a

in an AI like a program in a computer

though because the computer wouldn't be

ultimately real either I do not consider

physical matter to be ultimately

real which makes me a heretic from a

terab Buddhist point of view in that

respect I I lean more towards

Mahayana so let's see

here uh yeah I think I answered that
it's like we are dreaming our life as we
go along the wiser we are the more
skillfully we will
dream and sometimes I mean even in a
dream I think most people in the west at
least would agree that when you're
dreaming at night you're you're creating
that dream it's not like some God is
implanting the dream into your mind like
they believed in Ancient Ancient times
you know it's like you are creating that
dream but even so you can have bad
dreams you can have scary nightmarish
dreams all kinds of weird stuff can
happen that make you feel very icky and
and

uncomfortable and it's like that's
happening on a larger scale and a higher
level with us even when we're supposedly
awake because we're still not fully
awake we're still dreaming in a
sense so I think I'll just move on to
the next question

here and this is from covac andad zida
and he is our last questioner of the
evening but he has asked like five
questions here so let's attend to covac
and CAD Z shall we and his first
question is have you ever watched Star
Wars if so can you do an analysis of how
the various parts of Jedi Sith religion
and the force compare and contrast to

the Buddhist or other Traditions if you haven't watched it why not well I watched watch the original Star Wars in the movies when I was a kid and like the two sequels did not impress me much at all I thought the Ewoks were just a total waste of space and then years many years later a few decades later I watched like the prequel movies you know talking about how Darth Vader became Darth Vader and all that and then when it started going like super politically correct with the empowered women and so forth I I didn't watch any of those um I heard they they were awful anyway which kind of confirmed my decision not to watch

them

so let's see

here can I do an analysis how the various parts of Jedi or Sith religion and the force compare in contrast to the Buddhist or other Traditions um yeah I'm really I don't know where the the big explanation of Jedi and Sith religion comes in is probably not in the movies that I saw because I don't recall it I mean there's a little bit you know Luke Skywalker's getting trained to be a Jedi you know a little bit of talking with with uh you know Obi-Wan and Yoda and with regard to Yoda this is interesting that um before they made what was it The

Empire Strikes Back where Yoda makes his
Premier

debut in uh the Star Wars Universe there
were some

guys uh went to a a Cambodian Monastery
in Stockton California and I guess

George Lucas who was Lucas who was the
creator just I mean he was he lived just

a not far from there I can't remember

the name of the town I think it starts

with an M Modesto I think he comes from

Modesto which is like maybe 20 miles

from Stockton so he was familiar with

the area and there was a Cambodian

Monastery in Stockton California where

the Cambodian sa Raja lived in Exile

after the cim Rouge took over Cambodia

and you know pretty much killed off
Buddhism there at least
temporarily so you had this old
Cambodian senior monk he's over 100
years old he's like 102 years old and so
people from Lucas Films Studios you know
the star people making Star Wars the
stayed at that Monastery and they're
like filming him and recording his voice
and everything and they based Yoda on
this Cambodian s

Raja I don't remember what his name was
people just called him

B so I mean you'd have a little bit of
dhama in there I guess through osmosis
you know just sort of moving from the

Cambodian s Raja into into Yoda to some degree I

assume but uh yeah Jedi and Sith

religion I'm not even sure I didn't I

didn't watch those movies I'm pretty

sure and with regard to the force at

least the the whole idea of the force is

that you know we're not completely Bound

by materialistic laws of physics that

there is a

paranormal uh you know it's like the

Paranormal does manifest in this world

and it can be cultivated to some degree

so I mean I'd go that far but in

Buddhism there is no like a cosmic Force

causing psychic powers or anything or

enabling psychic

powers

so yeah I mean I'm I'm not familiar

enough with the Jedi and or Sith

religion because I just didn't watch the

later movies where presumably it was all

explained because I just watched the

earlier ones so I'll just move on to

seov and cot zona's next question here

I remember you define pow differently

than others like the asaas as

encumbering influences which stick close

to the Jane influence of this term can

you please make a glossary of terms you

define differently than standard I'm

asking because it seems you have a

better understanding in the historical

context well yeah I haven't come up with like a comprehensive glossary of every word that I've defined differently from just the standard definition and in most cases I just go with the standard definition like s is mindfulness a lot of people don't like the term mindfulness for sad and it's interesting that sad is in the Burmese language they pronounce s like th so it's the but they put that on on warning signs you know you know like attention and that's kind of good I mean Sadi can be defined as attention you know oone but um let's see I just lost myself by talking about that let's see make a

glossery of terms yeah like oh yeah like
I was saying like meta I'm willing to
call it loving kindness which is kind of
a kind of a dumb sounding term for meta
but with regard to most
words that I mean if there's an
established equivalent in English I'm
more than likely to go along with the
establish equivalent just to avoid
confusion cuz like aantonio I mean
he's way more likely than I am to
deviate from the usual terms um
venerable Nana mole who who translated
the Wii manga was was similar where I
mean he just wanted you know he wasn't
really influenced much by established

usage and sometimes you don't know what they're talking about like aan tanero can talk about frames of reference and you don't know what he's talking about unless you just know that he's referring to sa

patana you know which is usually know

Foundation of mindfulness or uh

something like that establishments of mindfulness or

something so or like nibana aan tanra

defines it as unbinding based I

assume um on this kind of a spirous

atmology but

um uh there are a few words that I do

translate differently like ch

it's usually translated as volition but

um I do translate it as volition

sometimes but I do like just

schopenhauer's will you know even with a

capital W it's will you know it's it's

what

manifests this this version of existence

that we are in you know so it's like

schopenhauer or like

and um it's it's one of the links in the

Standard 12 link theory of picha suup um

um it's usually translated as clinging

you know because of craving there is

clinging because of clinging there is B

which I'll get to that AA Don literally

means uptake and it does make more sense

because of craving you have uptake it it

makes more sense than because of craving
there's clinging to me anyway it just
clinging just never struck just never
really seemed real to me and uptake also
or OA Don it could also mean fuel
like just among non philosophers in the
ancient Ganges Valley aaron was like
firewood so uptake kind of fits that I
like that and then as I was saying in
the standard the standard uh 12 link
theory of picha sopa because of because
of TNA you have aana because of craving
you have uptake because of upad you have
bat and bat it's
a lot of translators I mean it's it's
one of those kind of vague words that
different translators will translate

differently and U I think it's often translated as becoming which just seems kind of new Agy doesn't really make much sense to me but bah it's it's essentially referring to volition or will again you know it's sort of almost like a short circuit in the 12 medon theory of P because you have you have karma in two different places on the same the same uh sequence the first time it's it's Sara and the second time it's B and B is just like the the force of existence it's like the momentum like I was talking about earlier it's just this this momentum or stream that is just driving

us

forwards

so that's another one another one would just be Dua itself usually Dua is translated as suffering although um it's not Universal aan tanro who I've already mentioned he translates it as what is it stress which I don't think is a good translation either I translate Dua as unease which seems pretty good although there is no one English word that fits Duca because dooka is the entire Spectrum from just the vaguest slightest discomfort or dissatisfaction up to just you know unbearable Agony you know all of that any kind of negativity that you experience is

dooka but negativity is really not a
good not a good uh term for that or good
rendering of Dua so I I render it as
unease which is convenient because then
the opposite of dukka is Suka and then I
can just render that as ease which is uh
very nice in my
opinion so I mean there's other ones but
most of the terms that that I've deviate
from just established precedent are
words that are kind of ambivalent they
don't have uh good I mean nobody
everyone doesn't agree on how to
translate it so I just make my own
translation or also P Sam itself I
almost always render that as dependent

Co Rising rather than I mean there's
there's lot of uh translations or
renderings of picha s which is partly
because nobody really understands it
very well or not very many people
understand it very well especially
Scholars

so those are some of the main ones there
are lesser ones like my AA waga
translation I mean sometimes like
especially in the Ana waga there are
puns where you've got a word that has
two or more meanings in it's obviously
they're using this word

Ambiguously to mean more than one thing
at the same time and then I'd just be
racking my brains as a as a young monk

when I was making the translation
sometimes just stewing and stewing and
stewing trying to come up with an
English equivalent you know an English
word or short phrase that has the same
combination of possible
meanings so I mean there was some of
that too in my translation of the AA
waga but I'll just I'll just move on
that's some of the main ones you know
ASA B Du P those are like some of the
most important ones that I deviate from
established president to the extent that
there even is an established president
like Asawa there's several different
renderings of that and P like I said

there's several different renderings of that so I figured I won't be confusing very many people by just coming up with my own term which I think fits the poly better

anyway so I think I'll just move on to coac and sead Z's next

question which is

do you plan on going to any High School reunions in the future now that you are no longer a monk living in a cave on the other side of the

planet um I don't know I might have gone to my 10year reunion or my 20-year

reunion but um nowadays I mean if I went to like a 50-year reunion or something I mean that's a little bit down the road

but I don't think they do 40-year reunions man it would it'd be sad to see like Lori Heggy or Lisa Anderson or like beautiful girls that I was I had like a crush on as as just like Grandma you know they're looking like somebody's grandma and probably are somebody's grandma it' just be kind of sad but I mean I'd be kind of open-minded to that but I'm not gonna really yeah I'm not I'm not planning on it so I think I'll just uh move on the next question here

and this is also from Cacin Sead Z based on the Buddhist cosmology beings higher up are more powerful other than the

formless Realms however Yama is said to be the judge for being entering the hell Realms and called The Lord Of Death how powerful is he on the scale of the Godlike beings is he above the Brahma Gods is he for great King level Etc well well yamama has very little mention in the Buddhist texts I think he might be mentioned maybe one or two times I mean there is a Yama heaven where there are Yama Gods but according to the commentarial tradition is Yama that I mean he's most wellknown from Hinduism like there's uh one of the most well-known upanishads is a like a a dialogue between Yama the king of death and and this Brahman I

think uh he doesn't even live there he's
I'm pretty sure that according to
Orthodox terava he's down in the the
level of the Four Kings which is just
one level above the human level and he's
really not the judge for beings entering
hell because according to to Buddhism
it's your own Karma sends you to heaven
or hell or wherever it is that your
karmic stream goes after it's cut off
you know in this life it's going to go
somewhere else just according to just
laws of dhama you know there is no God
deciding this
stuff so he's kind of like a little bit
of Indian mythology that kind of you

know crept into Buddhism through osmosis
I suppose but there's really no place
for him you know sort of like the asuras
that are just sort of obsolete there's
not much place for them either in
Buddhist cosmology so Yamama might be
mentioned a few times in the text
but he's really I mean he's just sort of
redundant he's like a he just doesn't
fit into the Buddhist scheme of
things but I think he is acknowledged in
the commentarial tradition as being in
the realm of the four the Four Kings
which as I say is just one level above
the human level so it's he's in the same
level as like goblins and
stuff so I'll just move on to the next

question which is the last question of
the evening

and that is what was the moment or event
that changed your perception the most
when in Burma and that's a good

question if I do say so myself and I
just did didn't

I and I was thinking about this for
quite a while several minutes anyway and
I mean there was no moment I couldn't
think of any moment where just something
clicks that that really really like
radically changed my perception but I
guess the event that that changed my
perception the most and I've mentioned
this

before I've written about it although
it's not in any of my published books at
present um it was I've been a monk for
about 10 years you know I've been really
going for it just living out in caves in
the forest just going as full blast as I
can manage and then I got some kind of
fever just some sort of weird sickness
and it just deprived me of all pleasure
in life you know it's like there's like
four Pleasures that are still allowed to
monks one is eating one is sleeping one
is bathing and one is just the Bliss of
Janna and eating was out everything
tasted awful I mean I have to force
myself to eat sleeping I had insomnia
I'd just be lying awake bathed in cold

sweat at night bathing the the doctor
advised me I shouldn't take baths
because of the fever I should just like
sponge myself down and my meditation was
just shot so there was no Bliss of
Janna and I eventually just kind of went
into a kind of depression just I mean
I've been a monk striving to free myself
to liberate myself from dooka all this
time all these 10 years or so and still
I can just hit rock bottom like this and
it's like what I mean it's just what's
the
point that's just kind of the and that's
that's where I was when I was in the
state of depression and then after I

started feeling better you know the
fever finally you know subsided this
feeling of just futility you know what's
the point just lingered for months until
finally I just decided to just give up
and I wrote to my main teacher in Burma
venerable Kong Pulu chel and doya seatt
and wrote to my father also just saying
you know I just want to to take it easy
I don't want to be just like going full
blast just trying like this anymore it
just I mean it just it's not making me
happy you

know and uh so then I just kind of gave
up and the strange thing is and this is
the event that changed my perception it
was it was like what I needed to do at

the time is just giving up it just sort of broke all this resistance and I just entered in some of the best meditation of my life after that and it it lasted for months which was unprecedented at the time I was having just spontaneous really profound mindfulness experiences and so forth and it reminds me of uh like you read the varieties of religious experience by William James where he's talking about how for a lot of people like he's mainly talking about Christianity because he's in a western context but he's saying that a lot of people they don't really break through

until they finally just give up I mean
they just say I can't do it God I put
myself in your hands I'm at your mercy I
just can't do it and then that's when
like this sanctification process takes
over or some such and that's kind of the
way it worked for me at that time I mean
I I was starting to think that maybe I'd
really attain something really really
good and then of course it doesn't
happen the way you expect and everything
is impermanent and then you know the
really good meditation faded out
eventually after a number of months but
um it really did cause a a significant
shift in my understanding of dhama and
of

myself

so I guess that was it and that was the last question so if you have any questions about Buddhism about especially Tibetan Buddhism philosophy meditation Manas ISM me personally feel free to ask them in the comments below or if you have access to the Discord server you can ask them there if you're on my subscribe Star channel you can ask them there and I do appreciate the support for those of you who are and uh feel free to like And subscribe to this channel buy my one of my books if you are so inclined and be happy

hello and welcome to episode 67 of
question and answer I am your host P
Bosa and those of you who have watched
these shows before May notice I'm in a
different room because I'm in a
different house because we moved last
weekend which is
why um I didn't do a Q&A last weekend
because I was busy moving and still we
haven't got things fully sorted out and
there's like junk everywhere and oh well
but because we didn't do a Q&A last
weekend I've got approximately twice the
usual number of questions which is going
to take a while and so because this is
probably going to be a pretty long one

before you start watching like if you're just settling down to watch this Q&A or listen to it you better go potty first and just pause it go potty come back because we're not going to wait for you so you're just going to have to pause it because we're not going to wait for everybody to go potty because some people take a long time you know they're like in there reading and stuff or looking at their phone or whatever and we're not we just we just don't go with that so because we got so many questions I better just wait into this and the first question is from the anti-marxist league and the anti-marxist league says I am now planning to

renounce the world as you suggested in a previous Q&A I've been slowly moving toward that the past year or so anyway due to congenital defects in my skeletal system I do not think I would be able to go overseas to become an ordained monk it might not even be an option with a monastery in the United States but I am fortunate in that I own my own home free of any debt I have been converting it into a sort of urban Hermitage I need very little money to get by I've been using some articles from your blog primarily ult Buddhism what it is or could be and karmic minimalism in the secular West as a guide to developing a

quasi monastic way of life for myself do
you have any additional suggestions this
may or may not be full renunciation of
the world but it is likely the closest
I'll be able to get in the present
circumstances of this life well
congratulations to the anti-marxist
league for intending to renounce the
world um I'm not sure exactly what kind
of congenital defects to the skeletal
system

that the anti-marxist league has so that
I'm not really sure whether it would be
disqualifying for him to become a monk
um in Asia or the United States but he
does have his own home free of debt and
I mean we can say we own our own home I

mean we own this this home now but
really you got to pay property taxes and
all sorts of bills and so forth so we
don't don't really own anything not even
our own meat

puppet so that is good that you got
everything paid off though that's you
know as as paid off as you

can so he wants additional suggestions
with regard to renouncing the world this
sort of being a a western unordained
quasi

renuncian and one big thing would be I
mean I assume he still has to pay bills
you know he still has to buy food and
and you know pay the utilities and so

forth pay the property

tax so I mean he probably has to have a
job

still and I would suggest you get a job

that's that's sucks you into Samara as

little as possible just a quiet

repetitive kind of job that's relatively

stressfree doesn't involve a lot of

interpersonal interactions especially if

you're going to be like a quasi hermit

renunciant you know you don't want to be

into sales and marketing or um you know

real estate anything like that um my job

is is fairly I mean I like my job in

that um I'm mostly working in a you know

a sheet metal shop just mostly running

machines and it's just sort of a

repetitive thing like if I have to make 60j channels or head trim if you prefer then you know it's just you just make this piece of metal you know bend it in a certain way and you set it aside you know you're doing it mindfully or carefully at least you know and you got to be aware you know pay attention to what you're doing so you don't squish your fingers and so forth or you don't bend it the wrong way so you know and then when you come home you can just forget what you what you were doing at work which is nice uh another advice I would give is if you have a TV set get rid of it that used to

be one of the first piece pieces of
advice I would give to people is I mean
if you want to live a more spiritual
life just get rid of your TV
set and um it may seem a little
hypocritical now because we've got a TV
set in the living room right now my
woman has been striving to get one in
the bedroom and so far I've been I've
been able to resist
that but uh just just internet also um
you know try to keep that to a bare
minimum the anti-marxist league just
today joined um our Discord server so I
guess he'll have to use internet for
that at
least but um also I might as well add

that Tom pci's advice to people who
wanted to live a spiritual life is eat
less sleep less read Less Talk
less

so considering that uh the information
he gave is very

General um I don't really know his his
circumstances so I can't really give him
specific

advice and also because we've got lots
and lots of questions here I suppose
that will be good enough for now and if
there's anything in particular he wants
he wants to know he can he can ask me
again either in a Q&A or on the server
or

whatever so we'll just move on to the
next question here this is from covac
and sead

zida and covac and CAD zida

says you mentioned that AA means uptake
and Asawa means encumbering influence

what is the connection between these two
concepts because it seems both are

related to things that are coming in and

yeah they're they're not only uh related

to things that are coming in they're

they're related to things that are

essentially what are preventing you from

becoming enlightened or

liberated the AA Don um it's craving

causes

aaon or clinging usually is the

translation for AA Don is clinging and it's yeah it's like attachment you know clinging and attachment are the cause of all suffering in in one version of the Four Noble Truths

so um uptake in Asawa or aaron and Asawa they're pretty much synonymous in in early Buddhism like in early text there lots of different words that mean essentially the same thing and finally or not finally but as as Buddhism early Buddhism um sort of uh like streamlined its its philosophy and sort of settled on you know doctrines and so forth um they settled on terminology and so a lot of the early terms just sort of fell

away or you know they're still there in
the sutas but they just didn't get
continually used later on
and that's one way you can tell early
suas from later suos is they'll have
this sort of archaic terminology that
isn't yet
standardized so aaon and Asawa probably
mean about the same thing although um
aad Don seems to be more of a conscious
thing you know it's it's like an act of
will you know that you you take this
thing you know you you adhere to it you
cling to it whereas Asawa um there's
more of a connotation of a lot of it is
subliminal you know it's like
subconscious you know underlying

Tendencies would maybe be associated with Asawa more than with aaron but ultimately they mean pretty much the same thing it's just something that that you something that you're attracted to you desire it you cling to it and then that clinging acts as a kind of Burden that prevents you from becoming liberated

so I think I'll just move on to covod andad Z's next

question which is as

follows to achieve Janna we must remove the five hindrances nana and when they are absent we naturally enter Janna since an Aran never has the five

hindrances present are they technically
always in Janna and the Orthodox answer
to that is no in fact there are arahant
that never attain Janna there are arant
called dry Vision to areans who don't
have any psychic powers you know they
they they're not masters of Janna um
they just uh got like what is it like
neighborhood concentration and this is
going with like Orthodox
explanations um and just through through
weasa through through uh Insight they
became enlightened without going into
really deep um contemplative
States so to achieve Janna we we must
remove the five hindrances temporarily
you know you don't you don't remove them

permanently until you're fully
enlightened

but you have to suppress them or like
attenuate them you know keep them at Bay
just and then but then even when you do
that you don't just automatically get
Janna I mean you still have to develop
samadhi and so forth so that removing or
attenuating the five

hindrances um it's just like opening a
door just because the door is open
doesn't mean you're going through it but
you can't go through it unless the door
is open they're they're

prerequisites to move on to the next
stage so you have to remove or you know

keep at Bay temporarily the five
hindrances in order to attain Janna but
they're not the same thing it's it's not
like you just automatically get sucked
into Janna when you're like in a quiet
relatively serene
mindful
mood

so I'll just move on to CAC and CAD Z's
next question which is the ancient
school called the pugala of vadin had the
idea that even though there is no self
there is a person existing they say
personhood is like fire created by the
fuel of the Aggregates they use Samu
Kaya

[Music]

2222 22 22 to back this up quote the
five Aggregates are truly burdens the
burden carrier is the person taking up
the burden is suffering in the world
laying the burden down is blissful
unquote the Terra Kata watu goes to
extreme lengths to say that this is a
false View and tries to make it seem
like it is affirming a self I've heard
some Scholars of early Buddhism claim
that the puga VAV VI is probably the
closest to what is in the sutas but I
don't know what are your thoughts on
this subject well with regard to this
last statement here I've heard some
Scholars of early Buddhism claim the PO

a lot of you is probably the closest to what is in the sutas I would guess that these are Western people who just have this Western preference for a real self maybe even an eternal soul and when they see the Pug ofoten views they're like Ah that's that's good I like that I must be right but yeah pug of

um other Buddhists had this tendency to consider the pugal ladans to be people who kicked atad out through the front door and then snuck it in through the back again by calling it something else you know they couldn't call it Atma or ATA because obviously Buddhism teaches no self so they come up with this person or individual the

puga the

pudala and

yeah in a way um I mean all Buddhism

even terraa Buddhism would agree that

personhood is like a fire created by the

fuel of the Aggregates you know but a

fire has no like abiding Essence it's

different from one moment to the next

every particle in that fire is different

from one moment to the next and so the

the name fire is just this convenient

like w Des it's just this like worldly

language

that is ultimately delusional or at

least

illusory but I mean you have to use

words when you're dealing with samsara
so it's this samsaric term that you
stick on to the person I mean the Buddha
himself referred to people you know he
referred to persons but he wasn't
insisting that they are ultimately real
because they aren't and what the pugala
vādins were trying to do is to try to say
that there is some reality to this
person aside from just
like like like a flame or a river that's
just different from one moment to the
next with no abiding self
Essence so that was the problem with the
puga vadens and uh I do not think that
the early Buddhists were pugala vadans I
don't think the Buddha himself was

teaching pugal

laada it may be that the earliest

Buddhism like in the Tica waga is saying

don't believe in self don't believe in

not self don't believe anything and then

early

Buddhism according to the hypothesis

just figured you know you have to choose

between is and isn't to form a position

you have to have a position in order to

have like this spiritual system that

organized you know with with a set of

tenants and doctrines and so forth and

so isn't is safer than is just because

you got less to cling to so there is a

chance that it started off you're not

supposed to believe in self or not self
but then the early Buddhist settled on
not self but even that is is uh not
helping the pugal laadan view at all
because really I I do agree that they
probably you know they they kicked out
self through the front door and then
snuck it in through the back
again so I'm just going to move on to
the next question here also from covac
and CAD

zida which is the Dum Kaa sect in
Thailand claims that unlike all other
things nibana is the true self are they
regarded as heretical and what are your
thoughts on them I've never heard I
heard of the damay sect in Thailand and

I have heard a lot of um Tha aons
talking about the cheetah that is beyond
the Aggregates that is the true self or
you know it's the Observer you know even
aan cha was talking about how the
cheetah is you know the Observer of
phenomena and so forth
but I mean to say that nibana is the
true self is just yeah that's just flat
out heresy because it's Sab D Saar Dua
mean all condition things are Dua Saar
an you know all condition things are Ana
but it's not Sab Sankara anata it's Sab
dama anata which means anything
conditioned or otherwise including
nibana is not

self so yeah they're Heretics going with
Orthodox terraa

anyway in my thoughts on them yeah I've
never never really heard of the damaka

SE I mean that's I've heard of the

dharmakaya which is the belief in sort
of a universal pervasive Consciousness

or you know the Buddha Essence that

pervades the entire

universe but uh that's a Mahayana

concept and not a teren

one so yeah I think I gave my thoughts

and so I'll just move on to seac and SE

zon as next question which is can you

please do more sua readings and yeah I

can do

that yeah I don't have a problem with

that it's just that especially lately I mean I went through like a month of stress and sort of just being kind of depressed like my my Consciousness was kind of contracted and I wasn't doing much more uh videos than were necessary and then we started moving and yeah there's been a lot of stuff going on you know I work full-time but pseudo readings are actually pretty easy because I sit there and read and then you know give a little bit of commentary afterwards so yeah yeah I can do that especially if people keep pestering me I need a a fire under my ass to get going sometimes so I'll just move on to coac

and said Z's next and last question
which is in the dīghanikāya 15 which is
uh the nidāna sūta if I remember
correctly in Dīghanikāya 15 the Buddha
considers four views of a self the first
is that feeling is self and is easy to
understand because feelings are
impermanent and that means that the
supposed self is also impermanent
however the second view of the self are
about rebuking someone who says feelings
are not self and then he gives this long
it's like a commentarial thing including
lots of quotes but he he kind of messed
up there's like typos and stuff that and
he sort of skips one part or gives it
the wrong name or something so I'm just

going to I've I've already kind of
looked up Deacon nayah 15 this is uh
Walsh's translation I'll just read this
entire section and then get back to his
question here and that is in what ways
aanda do people regard the self they
equate the self with feeling feeling is
myself or feeling is not myself myself
is incipient or or feeling is not myself
but myself is not imp percipient it is
of a nature to feel now Anand one who
says feeling is myself should be told
there are three kinds of feeling friend
Pleasant painful and neutral which of
the three do you consider to be yourself
when a pleasant feeling is felt no

painful or neutral feeling is felt but
only Pleasant feeling when a painful
feeling is felt no Pleasant or neutral
feeling is felt but only painful feeling
and when a neutral feeling is felt no
Pleasant painful feeling is felt but
only neutral feeling Pleasant feeling is
impermanent conditioned dependently
Arisen bound to Decay to vanish to fade
away to cease and so to our painful
feeling and neutral feeling so anyone
who on experiencing a pleasant feeling
thinks this is myself must at the
sensation of that Pleasant feeling think
myself has gone and the same with
painful and neutral feelings thus
whoever thinks feeling is myself is

contemplating something in this this
present life that is impermanent a
mixture of happiness and unhappiness
subject to arising and passing away
therefore it is not fitting to maintain
feeling is

myself but anyone who says feeling is
not myself myself is imp percipient
should be asked if friend no feelings at
all were to be experienced would there
be the thought I am to which he would
have to reply no Lord therefore it is
not fitting to maintain feeling is not
myself myself is imp percipient and
anyone who says feeling is not myself
but myself is not incipient myself is of

a nature to feel should be asked well
friend if all feelings absolutely and
totally ceased could there be the
thought I am this to which he would have
to reply no

Lord therefore it is not fitting to
maintain feeling is not myself myself is
not incipient my self is of a nature to
feel

okay so that was the part he was asking
about now I got to find this again

okay so then at the end of his question
he says can you please explain the logic
in these three points and what they are
trying to say so first is the self is
feeling um yeah I mean the suit is
pretty much Prett explains that fairly

well it's you know the feelings are
changing all the time you know sometimes
they're Pleasant feelings sometimes
unpleasant feelings but it's different
feelings all the time and so if you stop
having a feeling then you would stop
having
yourself um in a sense it's in a way
it's sort of like the flame analogy
again it's like the flame is different
from one moment to the next so you can't
really call it an abiding
entity and you know our feelings are the
same way you can't really call those an
abiding entity because they're always
changing so then the other part the

other theory is that your feeling is
incipient and uh let's see
here so my friends should feelings all
together in every way stop without
remainder then with feeling completely
not existing owing to the sensation of
feeling would there be the thought I am
and that's no lord well a self
presumably would be aware to have a
completely unconscious self I mean it's
it's almost like a contradiction in
terms so that's that's sort of what he's
referring to here is if yourself is just
oblivious to everything you know it
doesn't feel anything then I mean how
could you say that it's yourself I mean
it's we assume that our self is you know

the Observer you know the the one that's
feeling the feelings and so if you're
saying that yourself doesn't feel
feelings then I mean yourself is just
blind and dumb and and just unconscious
essentially it's completely
unaware so so then the third one is
you've got a self that isn't your
feelings but it is sensitive to feelings
and then let see what is how does he
argue
this see thus in this manner n no one
does not see fit oh wait I think I
skipped
that whether am I I'll have to go back
to the original

here okay and anyone who says feeling is
not myself but myself is not incipient
myself is of a nature to feel should be
well friend if all feelings absolutely
and totally ceased could there be the
thought I am this to which there would
have to be the reply no Lord so that
one's a little more subtle maybe a
little

trickier it's just saying that um you
know if the feelings stopped then
yourself would have to stop too because
again just like before yourself would
just be oblivious it'd be unaware and
people do not consider their self to be
unconscious or completely oblivious and
unaware so the very possibility that

that could happen that your feelings
could stop would mean that yourself I
mean it wouldn't be your your yourself
would continue somehow but it would be
like blind and deaf and just numb and
everything and there wouldn't be
anything there because even feelings
apply to your own thoughts so you're
yourself wouldn't be able to have any
kind of subjective experience or like
objective experience
so I guess that's what it
means and uh that was a long question so
I better move on to the next question
this is from Arin and Arin says did you
ever see Burmese people with tattoos or

do they have any traditional tattoos
yeah it's pretty lots lots of people got
tattoos in Burma I've seen monks with
just tattoos all over them in fact up
until

around maybe around World War II or a
little after it was traditional for all
Burmese men to be tattooed from their
waist to their knees and so it it'd be
all covered up um by their sarong you
know like this ly but um if they'd have
to lift up their their skirts to cross a
a creek or something you know it'd just
be like sleeve tattoos just covering you
know their behind and their legs their
thighs and
everything um but that's kind of out of

style now but still lots and lots of tattoos I used to know this monk he had a degree in English he was a university he had a University degree in English and he just had tattoos all over his body but the thing is the main purpose of

tattoos in Burma is not ornamentation it is like protection you know it's the power of the tattoo prevents you from from like being the victim of Witchcraft or just bad luck in general or snake bites um I was told that it used to be the case that thieves like burglars would get a tattoo of a yawning cat tattooed onto their thigh which would

make them more agile they could like jump higher and stuff but I cannot recall seeing a tattoo on a Burmese person I assume they're there yeah I I'm sure that there are you know people will get like a there some guy will have like a big spider or something tattooed on his arm but um aside from that most tattoos in Burma are protective like you can go to a fair like even like little kids they'll go to a fair and they'll be like the tattoo artist there he'll just like tattoo like three dots on their wrist like right here that has some protective value where they'll have something called an in which looks sort of like a

tic-tac-toe with like just sort of
abstract symbols in in various boxes of
the Tic Tac Toe board that has some
supposedly some paranormal like virtue
to

it so

yeah like that in thing or the just the
three dots would be standard traditional
tattoos so I'll just move on to arin's
next tattoo

question if a Burmese villager had to
get a Buddhist tattoo what do you think
would be the most likely Buddhist symbol
or image they would
choose and I cannot remember seeing like
a specifically Buddhist tattoo on a

Burmese Buddhist I assume some people do
maybe just the three dots would be like
you know Buddha dama SA or something
that that has the power just these three
dots because it it symbolizes you know
the the Three Gems or
something um but I've never seen like a
Buddha image tattooed on somebody or a
Bodie leaf or anything like that um
maybe some kind of text but I can't
remember remember seeing that either
most of the tattoos I've have seen other
than just just the standard Scorpion or
or spider or something would be like
these magical protective
tattoos
so if a burmes villager had to get a

Buddhist tattoo they had to get one what
do you think would be the most likely
Buddhist symbol or
image oh gosh I don't know just three
dots
maybe
maybe so next question next tattoo
question from Arin if you yourself had
to pick just one Buddhist image to put
on your body forever what would it be
and that's kind of cheating I I would
cheat because if I were get a tattoo I'd
just get like the M symbol I don't have
any tattoos at present but like I
actually drew it I it's not a good
drawing but you know

um like maybe like on my left shoulder
blade or something
and and technically this is Hindu you
know there's like upanishads mentioning
om and so forth but it has been adopted
by Buddhists you know om manme that kind
of a thing it might be Mahayana Buddhism
but it's still technically qualifies as
Buddhist I guess so yeah i' I'd do that
and then the ne arin's next question is
and what would you choose if you had to
get a non- Buddhist tattoo and
again Hindu buddh Buddhist and Hindu so
it's Buddhist and non- Buddhist at the
same time although my sweetheart has uh
talked about us getting like a a symbol
representing us that nobody would know

what it meant except for us I guess
somewhere on our our bodies so that
would be it'd be like a tossup between
that and and M I
guess so that's it for the Aran tattoo
questions and next is the Arya SU
project who says is Arin trying to get
you to get a
tattoo and uh yeah I think maybe she is
tell you the
truth so I think I'll just move on to
Arya sasi project next question do you
believe in or do you believe there is
any validity to the stories of any of
the following Bigfoot the loch nest
monster Yeti or

chupacabra well um Bigfoot and ye I think would go together they'd be like two species of the the same genus assuming that they're biological entities but the thing is even the Burmese have their version of Bigfoot which they call the yay and it's big and it's hairy and it smells bad and it lives in the woods and it can abduct people you know it's it's scary you don't want to you don't want to mess with them but they're considered to be a kind of ghost you know they can appear and disappear which may be why they haven't actually caught one of these things or at least um the government's not admitting to it if you know what I

mean

so um the Loch Ness monster I'm not so sure about the Loch Ness monster I'm rather skeptical that there's like some kind of plesiosaur there'd have to be a number of them like reproducing there so it' have to be a large enough population that they're not just killing themselves off with inbreeding you know was Lethal genes doubling up on them uh I have no idea what a chupacabra really is I never really studied up on chupacabras for some reason but Bigfoot or yetis it could be I mean I've discussed this sort of thing before with uh guests on on the show that has no name um it

could just be a kind of like some a
being from an alternate World close to
ours on a similar vibration to ours that
can kind of bleed through you know
especially like modern Western humans um
you know we're sort of like a a radio
receiver that's very precise in the
wavelength or the you know the frequency
that we can pick up but reality is just
you know all possible
frequencies and so more primitive people
or children certain animals they might
have a fuzzy or less narrow wavelength
that they're receptive to because they
haven't refined it down to be precise in
this materialistic world you know
they're they're living in a more

dreamlike kind of world and it could be that in a world like that you know they can see things that other people can't see because they're seeing things that are close to our reality but just kind of right on the other side of the veil so to speak and uh yeah it may be that something like a Bigfoot or a Yeti or a the Y you know they can sort of blend through you know they just kind of bleed through for especially for people that um you know they're more linal so to speak you know they just have a broader fuzzier wavelength of reality that they're receptive to with regard to the loch nest monster

I I'm not sure I mean I've seen the old famous pictures and stuff

but

um yeah that's a weird

one but with regard to Bigfoot and Yeti

I think there might be some some kind of

reality to them but I don't think that

they are biological creatures you know

like anthropoid apes or anything like

that I do think that they're like a Lial

kind of paranormal event that can sort

of bleed into our version of reality

because they're coming from a reality

that's close enough to ours that there's

a certain

Affinity so I'll just move on to the

Aras sasi projects next question

here is it ever acceptable to deceive
another by withholding information if
there is no intent to
harm not lying but not telling
everything you might know I should add
that this scenario is in regard to any
transaction to get another to act or
conform with one's own will side note I
believe that most if not all business
transactions have some element of this
um

well withholding information is
ethically neutral in buddh I mean not
doing anything to just remain silent is
it's morally ethically neutral unless
you've got some kind of bad mental

States causing you to be silent but just outwardly this sitting there not doing or saying anything is just ethically neutral so but then he adds this proviso a little further down um I should add that this scenario is in regard to any transaction to get another to act or conform with one's own will well I think sometimes let's say um somebody wants to do something like immoral or something harmful to themselves and you just keep your mouth shut you like they're saying oh I'd love to go to that party but I don't have a ride and you know that they could have a ride but you just don't say

anything because you don't want them to go to this party where there's going to be like heroin addicts or or whatever you know it's it's it would be a it would not be a good experience for them you just sit there in silence then uh that might be more good than bad even though in a way I mean I don't I'm not sure how you deceive another person by withholding information other than you know you're selling them a car and you just don't tell them that the transmission is shot you know that's not good but I mean if you're doing it for their benefit

then yeah I think that wouldn't necessarily be a bad thing because again just remaining silent is not in and of itself immoral you know under any circumstance but it depends on your motivations because it's your the accompanying mental States causing you to be silent that are really the point so yeah if I mean if best interests I mean the other person's best interests are are your concern and you're just remaining silent I think that yeah that would be fine in certain cases so I'll just move on to the next question which is from Liber Lam and Liber Lam says would you consider traveling to Burma again to get a

traditional Sak yant tattoo so there's a lot of tattoo questions tonight would you ask for a custom tattoo or go with their gut feeling I hear they usually decide for the person what tattoo to give them well I'm not exactly sure what a sakyant tattoo is I've never heard the term sakyant before at least I don't remember hearing it so would I consider traveling to Burma again to get a traditional sakian tattoo no I would not I would not seriously consider traveling to Burma at all really for any reason I've had I've lived in Burma for more than 20 years like 23 24 years and uh yeah I don't have any real reason to go

back there I wouldn't go all the way
back to get some kind of traditional
Burmese tattoo one reason for that is
the Burmese bless their hearts for the
most part have very little aesthetic
tastes they're just not an artistic or
aesthetically sensitive people I've met
a few Burmese people that were very
talented artists I have to admit but
they are exceptions to the rule even
most people who are called artists in
Burma they just learn how to crank out
the same kind of picture or statue or
song Just I mean it's just they learn
this this like
a I don't know what you call it like a
template and they just they just keep

cranking them out and they're not really artists at all in my opinion but uh yeah the regular the average Burmese tattoo artist or even the average Burmese tattoo artist is somebody I would not let come near me with with like tattooing needles because I would not trust that they they' give me something that didn't look like a total eyesore and I really don't have any great faith in magical protective tattoos anyway it's it's like a placebo effect if you believe that it's helping you and protecting you it might actually help you and protect you but still I

think the own would protect me just as
well as any you know

greenish ink thing that some traditional
Asian tattoo artist would want to put on
my body and as a general rule it's all
just monochrome it's all just one color
of ink like greenish bluish or bluish
greenish or

something

so yeah no I wouldn't ask for a custom
tattoo or go with their gut feeling I
mean if I had if someone was like
forcing me to get a tattoo from the
traditional saki yant tattoo artist in
Burma you know he forced me to go to
Burma you know at gunpoint presumably
and he he just marched me to this s

sakan tattoo artist then uh at least I
got the choice of going with my own
design or letting them decide yeah I I
trust my own taste more than I would
trust this total

stranger I might be able to like look at
what he's got tattooed on his own body
but uh you know get some idea but then
again it might be some other sakyant
tattoo artist that that tattooed
him

so yeah I'm I'm just not really into
tattoos I have to I have to admit my
father had a tattoo my brother's got
several even my sweetheart's got one or
two but um I just never had any desire

sort of like it's like the brand new jar
of peanut butter where you don't want to
you don't want to mess it up cuz so
smooth and nice on top I kind of feel
that way about my own skin to some
degree even though it's it's gradually
getting less smooth as I get
older so we'll just move on to Libra
Lamb's next question here RFK Jr or
Donald Trump yeah I'm going with Donald
Trump definitely RFK Jr just the fact
that he's a Democrat I've I I'm pretty
sure within the past 10 years I must
have vowed at least once never to vote
Democrat ever
again I used used to vote Democrat all
the time

but they've gone

insane and uh yeah and I I know Donald Trump better than I know RFK Jr anyway I know what to expect now I voted for him even when I wasn't sure what to expect but he uh he satisfied me that he was a competent president un like our current installed

vegetable so yeah Donald Trump that was an easy question so I'll just move on to Lamb's next question here do you think if you tried meditating it would have any effect as a Layman compared to the higher States experienced as a monk um yeah if if I were to sit down cross-legged you know get into the full

Lotus if I'm still capable of doing that
and just Tred to meditate you know I'd
get decent meditation I suppose but I
don't think it would be anything
compared with the best meditation I had
as a monk just when you got all this
momentum going and you you're just
dedicating your life to meditating you
know meditating six hours a day at least
you know even if you're not doing any
kind of special Retreat just like my
first 10 years as a monk is probably
averaging about six hours a day of
meditation and uh yeah as a lay person
you know it's that's one reason why I
don't do systematic meditation anymore
it's just like having to go back to the

ABCs

so yeah it it would have some effect but
it wouldn't be anything remotely
resembling probably I mean I could be
surprised you know I could just sit down
and go into some deep contemplative
state but

um being realistic I would say that
probably it' just be sort of like
beginner's mind again where you're
you're just starting it again where that
would improve the quality of the
meditation but

um yeah it it would not be the same
level of meditation I guess that's the
question you asked so I answered it so

I'll just move on to the next question
this is from
ruie and ruie says hello poo there here
is the thing there is an inner visual
field that subsists there it is made of
colors shapes distances and intensities
of all the above sometimes just as
nonproliferation thoughts mentations
seems to be right at hand a color or
shape enters this inner field and it is
at once accompanied by its respective
tag I.E red fog fogginess left right in
front Etc what is your take on or
experience of this and then he asked
another question which is just a
continuation of the first one which is
or is there a more basic order that must

be in place to prevent this type of categorization to even occur in the inner field could that be hardcore CA could that be the resultant indifference to pleasure Pleasant neutral unpleasant or is the practice to be placed on directed to an utterly Transcendent order so what you saying here as far as I can understand this it is kind of abstract is that you've got this inner field of awareness and like you open your eyes let's just go with vision it's it's the standard thing that people talk about when they're talking about this sort of thing like uh I got a book Buddhist logic back

there on the
bookcase that's just it's standard is
like a pixel of blue that's like what
they're working with is this pixel of
blue and they're they're talking about
all the you know how you experience it
and you know what it leads to and what
it doesn't lead to if you somehow stop
experiencing the pixel of blue so it's
just go with vision field of vision but
you know it's like you can be like inner
Vision or just perceptual field in
general so it's made of color shapes
distances and intensities of all the
above sometimes just as
non-proliferation seems to be right at
hand a color or shape enters this inner

field and is at once accompanied by the
respective tag well first of all once
you get good enough at mindfulness the
respective tag stops you know you stop
thinking you stop identifying it as this
or that like you can be sitting there in
meditation

and a dog starts barking outside
somewhere and you hear it it's but it's
just sound it's just auditory sensation
you do not identify it as barking dog
you know once you've identified it as
Barking Dog you've pretty much stopped
meditating properly I mean you can you
do get sort of a second chance where you
can be mindful of yourself thinking

barking dog

but generally you know you hear The Barking Dog and you're think oh that dog is so noisy why why does its owner put up with this stuff and next thing you know it's 10 minutes later and you know you're still thinking about dogs or something thinking about some dog you had when you were six years old or something but so one of the beginning things you do is you try to stop the the mental commentary that's labeling stuff and then you can get more advanced where it's just like the sound of the Barking Dog you know it's it's just auditory sensation but then when you stop attributing qualities to it you know

it's just it's just passive reception
you're you're sort of like like a window
and the the sound is just going through
the window but it's like going in one
ear and out the other then um in a way
it just it all just becomes this
neutrality um I mean to some degree you
can't have it absolutely perfect because
for example I have read that even before
a visual uh datum gets to the optical
loes of your brain even your retina is
already starting to process the
information like it's sharpening
outlines that's one thing your retinas
do sharpens outlines and so you know
they're they're like fixing up the

shapes and everything to make them easier to process once it gets to your brain so I mean some of that is unavoidable but even so it's like I used to work on Japanese ships and I didn't know Japanese at the time and so you know I was just the the American biologist on board just observing the fishing operations because they were in US Territorial Waters and you just kind of tune it out you know people are talking Japanese you don't understand you know you understand maybe a few words of it but it's not worth the effort to try to understand what they're saying so you just kind of tune it out and to some degree you do that with

regard to everything when you're meditating but it's it's sort of a different kind of tuning out it's it's more like you just become like a mirror your mind becomes like a mirror that's just if anything is there it's there but you're not directing your attention to it you're not you're not like making any effort to perceive that to single it out and you know dis dismiss everything else it's just all there while it's there and then it goes away and something else is there but it's you're not thinking about it at all you know your mind is just like a mirror that it doesn't make any kind of Judge judgments or choices or

anything it's just it's all there and you're doing as little as possible to process the data so let's see here or is there a more basic order that must be in place to prevent this type of categorization to even occur well you have to develop mindfulness uh to a degree that's difficult if you're not a monk or you just don't have like an inborn Talent for it some people they're just natural born meditators you know they can work they can sell used cars or whatever and then they can just go into deep meditative States just because they've got like this Talent you know like a talent for drawing or

music or math or
something so could that be hardcore see
it's it's mysticism
essentially let's see yeah I mean you
get you get into a like a a deep
mystical state where everything
is H how do I explain it well I I
mentioned St John of the Cross before
and how St John of the Cross his his
instructions for how to do deep
contemplation not just superficial
meditation where you're visualizing
Jesus on the cross or doing you know
dear God please have mercy upon me a
sinner over and over again as a mantra
that kind of thing when you get into

high contemplation you just dismiss all thoughts any thought that comes by you just dis dismiss it you know or like in mahasi or Buddhist Meditation you just note it Let It Go note it Let It Go note it let it go until finally your mindfulness gets so good that even when a thought just starts to arise or any kind of perception even when it just starts to arise you catch it immediately and it just Fades back out again

so it I mean hardcore CA might be I mean according to Orthodox Terra probably other religious systems also you have to get your ca down before you can get somea you know you have to have perfect

Morality In order to have perfect
concentration and then you have to have
perfect concentration in order to have
perfect

wisdom according to the the
standard the standard

Doctrine but um yeah it's not just
hardcore cila this causes your mind to
stop processing data and it's when you
you stop processing data it doesn't mean
that you're in a coma that you're
unconscious you're not a hibernating
squirrel it's just that your mind is
just wide open and you're more conscious
than when you're perceiving stuff
because if you're perceiving something

you know the sound of the Barking Dog or
the the the blue dot the blue Speck I
mean you're focusing on that to the
extent to the expense of everything else
you know you're focusing on one thing
which is very much limiting your
awareness because you're focusing on
this one thing

whereas if your mind is like a cheap
camera where everything is equally in
Focus you're not really focusing on
anything it's all there you're you're
aware of the full spectrum of your
conscious

experience but you're not singling out
anything and you're not labeling
anything and or even if a label starts

to arise even that can just become part
of the sort just the stuff on the mirror
that is it's sort of like your second
chance it's not quite as good as as just
not having it Arise at all but
still I'm probably just confusing people
at this

point so yeah it's mysticism essentially
in a
word

so but yeah I mean you there there are
levels of meditation that are Way Beyond
um just automatically labeling things or
automatically singling things out
perceptively and you know just into a
this you know even that it's just

everything is just one big

this so I'll just move on to ru's next

question which is for a while now I see

little value in so-called Tranquility

meditation or and analytic meditation

however there is a taste of something

utterly Beyond something which seems to

depend only on a volitional intent

pardon the

pleonasm or on un willful momentum

question

mark or could these be just Mara

delusions of great

profundity

um yeah I mean you can call any kind of

perception a Mara delusion and the more

subtle the perception is the the greater

the profundity I guess of the mara
delusion um so you see his little value
in so-called Tranquility meditation and
or or or and you says analytic
meditation however there is a taste of
something utterly Beyond something which
seems to depend only on a volitional
intent or un willful momentum yeah well
I mean that may be so but then there's
another level beyond that Beyond
volitional intent and willful momentum
because volition and perception are two
aspects of the same thing they cannot
arise separately you know they always
have to be there together and uh I
personally do not consider them to be

two utterly distinct you know
qualitatively different things you know
volition and perception I think that
they're just two ways of looking at the
same thing and you can't have volition
without perception you cannot have
perception without volition and so
you're eventually going to go beyond
volitional perception I mean this world
is volition and perception the world as
will and representation the world as
volition and
perception schopenhauer's
terminology so yeah so long as you're
perceiving something you're still you
still got a samsaric mind you're G to
have to go beyond perception or at least

because the perception is itself um like
a manifestation of Consciousness you
just see the all these perceptions as
the underlying
Consciousness you know it's like you see
waves on the ocean you don't get
distracted by the waves you know you
just see it as
water that would be a good way of
putting it that'd be sort of a good way
of explaining like a mystical state
where there's still stuff going on
you're not just like a complete blank
but it might as well be a complete blank
because you're seeing it all as the same
underlying Consciousness for lack of a

better word but ultimately even that
becomes like
paradoxical and then you there's like
the stage beyond beyond that but I don't
want to just keep spouting gobbly that
maybe nobody will
understand
so yeah eventually um getting back to
ru's question here um you just get to a
point where you just really can't do
much more with um Regular meditation and
uh like St John of the Cross getting
back to St John of the cross he he was
saying that that's he had this really
interesting chapter in his book I think
it's the ascent of Mount Carmel where
he's telling you when it is the

appropriate time to stop meditating and start going into the high contemplation stuff and one of them is where you just get bored with doing meditation where is you know you see little value in it anymore and you just you're just tending towards silence you know you just want to sit there and just empty out and that that's a good sign that you're ready to start doing what he would call contemplation what a Buddhist would probably call Janna but according to ruy here that's Tranquility but if you get into real jna I think you will you'll see value in it so I'll just move on to uh ru's next

question here well it seems I'm now
passed the allowed number of questions
which is not true because one of his
questions I telescoped into two of his
questions I telescoped into into one and
still he's he still had another question
to go at least but I digress here well
it seems I'm now past the allowed number
of questions but the problem with music
and art in general is that it elicits
immediate judgments of taste which may
ensnare the mind driving it towards
opinion and may hinder the practice
especially if there is a deliberate
experiencing directed towards it or them
thoughts yeah I've I've people bring up
the point that like music even if

there's no lyrics it's just like
instrumental music I mean how could that
be bad but still you have to perceive it
and again when you're perceiving it
you're you're samsaric perception is
samsara so anything that requires you know
perceptual symbols is while you're
indulging in it you're indulging in Sam-
sara and in remaining stuck you're
wallowing in Sam-

Samsara oh although for a lot of people some
music can help to get them unstuck to
some degree because it's like the
perceptions they're experiencing are
more exalted or subtle than the
perceptions they'd be experiencing if

they were looking in some other
direction or listening to something
else

so but that's one reason why Buddhism as
a general rule has bad music doesn't
have nearly as good of music as say
Christians or Muslims or Hindus just
because music is considered be or at
least enjoying music is considered to be
immoral in Buddhism or unskillful
Karma

so yeah so I guess we kind of agree on
that so I'll just move on to the next
question this is from Joe do and joeo
says is there any other interviews with
Brian you could put on your playlist I
heard you guys did over 300 videos

surely more than 115 are PC enough for YouTube uh yeah actually we've done a total of six gillion videos so we've done quite a few in fact uh Brian tells me that he's done more videos with me than with any other guest we used to do a quite quite a lot of I think we were doing like two or three videos a week for like at least a year and then we went down to every two weeks and then we sort of after I dropped out of the monk Hood then Demand on having the guest monk um kind of evaporated we still do videos sometimes but yeah at first I wasn't putting any videos up so um for a while like maybe more than a year ago I

think I started just taking old videos that we had done and putting them on my own channel because they were only on his channel and he was okay with that he he liked the idea just further further not notoriety for

him um I did have to weed out uh a lot of videos because there are certain topics that are not to be mentioned on YouTube because you can get like warnings and Strikes and so forth and that was approximately half when I did start uploading our videos you know there maybe half of them were safe for YouTube um and but I only got about halfway through before I kind of fizzled out I've only done a few over the past

six months maybe just a few old ones I did but there's still um probably at least 50 videos that are safe for YouTube that I've done with with Brian that uh that I haven't has never been uploaded onto YouTube um by me and are not on YouTube now because Brian has been kicked off of YouTube like 17 times so yeah I can I can still upload old videos that I've done with Brian back when I was was a monk

um

so yeah and also some of the ones that weren't see for YouTube I still could upload on to bitshoot so you get a broader range of topics if you look for

old videos of me with Brian on bitshoot
so I'll just move on to joo's next
question here what's the longest someone
has sat in
meditation for that you know of also do
you believe that some Advanced monks
considered meditation for days or even
weeks without
moving um the longest someone has set in
meditation like that I have actually
seen there was a Korean Mahayana monk
who came to pandama in rangon when I was
there and he could just flop into the
full Lotus and just sit there like a
rock for three hours
straight
um and his his meditation interviews

were surreal but we we needn't get into
into that but um I've I've heard that
there is a famous Seattle he's
increasingly famous in Burmont I think
also in the west he's uh he's he's was
ordained in the theu tradition which is
pretty strange tradition and he makes
his at his meditation Retreats he'll
make them sit for like eight hours
straight in the full Lotus and it's just
this weird this going Beyond on the pain
kind of a thing they just eventually
they're in such Agony that they just
kind of transcend
it
so uh I've heard of other meditation

instructors who will make their like at
a Meditation Retreat make the yogis sit
like without moving for you know six to
eight

hours but um that's a little extreme I
think but with regard to some Advanced
monks that can sit in meditation for
days or even weeks yeah yeah I'm sure
that there aren't I think there are
probably more Hindus than Buddhists who
just go into these trans States and just
remain motionless for days on end I
think with regard to Janna in Orthodox
terraa it can last up to one or two
weeks I can't remember if it's one or
two weeks that is considered to be sort
of the maximum for remaining in a in a

state of deep

Jan but I'm sure I'm sure it happens

there's some real Heavy Hitters out

there that are just beyond the

comprehension

of most westerners including most

western

Buddhists and a lot of them are Hindus

because the Hindus are more

into um you know they're they're going

higher and higher the Buddhists they

kind of bail out sideways as soon as

you're able to get off ssara by bailing

out sideways you you're feel free just

go right ahead but with Hinduism it's

like they're just going for greater and

greater and greater and greater Purity
so that they're getting into these these
states where um you know you know they
can just sit there without moving for
for a week

straight all kinds of things you know
they they're more likely to get psychic
powers too or that's my

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

Garrett and Garrett says what does it
mean to be expelled from a tradition

Wikipedia says Bon suato was removed
from the aan cha Forest SAA lineage is
that akin to being disrobed no it's it's
nothing like being disrobed and you
can't really disrobe a monk this that's

sort of like a um it's just a misconception you can't kick a monk out of the sangha the only person that can kick a monk out of the sangha is the monk himself but I mean you can do formal acts of censure on them formal acts of expulsion where you can kick them out of a monastery or you can even more serious than that is you can make them sort of like not to be talked to you're not supposed to sleep under the same roof with them you're not supposed to bow to them or let them bow to you you're not supposed to share food with them you know they're just ostracized and that's as close as you can get to kicking a

monk out of the SAA unless you're you're
going to be like the Burmese government
notoriously did by just uh forcing a
monk to become part of jaica by having
like a prostitute rap him or
something because if you have sex and
you enjoy it for just one moment you
know while it's in there then uh you're
out do not pass go do not collect
\$200 so yeah Bon suata is not the only
one kicked out of the aan Sha Forest
tradition that was also uh aan BR got
kicked out because of his Monkey Shines
with ordaining
beunis and it wasn't just that he
ordained theunis it was The Story Goes
that anjan brah is the Abbott of a

monastery in Western Australia and he invited some of the senior monks in the aan cha tradition to come to Australia to discuss the possibility of ordaining bonis and then before they even showed up he already just went ahead and ordained the beunis just kind of as a way of having these senior monks just having to like Ascent to a done deal and they felt like they were like used you know they just felt like he had just done some shady trick on them or so I've been told and so he got expelled from the aan Sha tradition which all all it means if you're kicked out of the aan cha tradition is that you're not allowed

to stay at an aan cha Monastery anymore
the aan cha monks aren't allowed to stay
at your Monastery
anymore and I mean you're just not
considered to be an aan cha monk anymore
not officially anyway so they're still
monks but they uh they can't stay aona
monasteries anymore and aan Cha monks
can't are like strongly discouraged from
staying at one of these kicked out monks
monasteries too and that's really about
as far as it goes so we'll just move on
to the next question here this is from
keep the vinia and keep the vinia says
you said in a past Q&A that you became a
Buddhist monk because you liked the
strict rules and the interaction with

experienced monks does this mean that
concept such as rebirth and the Four
Noble Truths did not convince you of
Buddhism did you only become a Buddhist
monk for pragmatic reasons and I think
this is somewhat of a misunderstanding I
didn't become a Buddhist monk
necessarily because I like strict rules
and the interaction with experienced
monks I mean that's certainly not why I
became a Buddhist I mean I like the
Buddhist I like Buddhism because you
know it acknowledged that this is not
reality and that there is a way of
experiencing that reality there is a way
of penetrating the veil and experiencing

Ultimate Reality and that was the main reason why um I became a Buddhist and wanted to be an ordained monk I mean that's the ultimate reason why I became an ordained Monk Is I wanted to know reality not just the you know the the illusion but I wanted to know Ultimate Reality that's like behind the illusion but um the thing about the rule and the the strict monks um the interaction with strict monks is I knew myself well enough to know that you know I can be lazy and you know just come up with excuses for not doing the right thing or whatever so I liked being in the the system that had like this you know established rule you know set of

rules even though most monks don't even follow them but because I had ordained wanted I was a conscientious Monk and just wanted to follow the rules so you know it was it worked for me even though the monks around me were making very little effort to follow the rules so the experient interactions with experienced monks didn't help me a heck of a lot I mean it it did help because even though they might not be striving for enlightenment still they knew a lot of stuff that I didn't know but the main reason that I became a Buddhist monk is I wanted to know reality and so let's see does this mean

that Concepts such as rebirth in the for
Noble truths did not convince you of
Buddhism well my
father claimed to remember his rebirth
or his past lives I he he was a firm
believer in reincarnation since before I
was born you know I just grew up with
that and the Four Noble Truths yeah I
mean it's pretty much self-evident you
can't really deny that I didn't really
know much about the four noble truths
until I started studying Buddhism but uh
yeah I mean it does make sense I can
accept that um um it's not why I became
a monk though because it's like you got
two paths that are ultimately the same
they ultimately arrive at the same

destination it's you know the path of
the heart and the path of the head path
of the heart is more feelings oriented
maybe a little more faith oriented and
you want to eliminate suffering whereas
the path of the head is maybe more
masculine you know more intellect
oriented and so it's not so much
suffering that I wanted to get rid of or
to

you know to free myself from it was
delusion but you free yourself from
delusion it's the same as freeing
yourself from suffering I mean they they
go hand in hand but it's just two
different

emphases so I was really more into knowing reality than escaping from suffering my father was this Macho tough guy who used to say things like little pain never hurt anyone and I I still I mean as a lay person now I really have to live that you know a little pain never hurt anyone because I mean no matter what you do there's going to be pain you know as a monk or a lay person but as a lay person there may be a little more

pain um more distraction to you know sort of get in the way of you mindfully experiencing the pain without struggling against it sort of a thing

so so it's sort of a stoic lay Buddhism
that I'm practicing

now so I think I I think I answer that
yeah I guess I did I guess so I'll just
move on to the next question here also
from keep the

vinia and he says did you know that jism
also has a concept similar to the
Buddhist concept of no view it is called
anada anada and it states that the
ultimate truth in reality is complex and
has multiple aspects the parable of
blind man and an elephant is used in
jism to explain the doctrine of Anand V
of Ultimate Reality um yeah I think that
would be the same as sead Vada I read in

an Indian philosophy text many years ago
that in jism they have this Doctrine
called CAD Vada and
CAD um is some procrit and The Janes
have their scriptures written or
composed in a procrit language that
isn't Sanskrit and isn't poly it's it's
just this other this other form of
procrit that's similar to to poly and u
God means in a way or in a sense so in a
way there is no self in a way there is a
self in a way things can be permanent
and in a way things are can be
impermanant so it's like according to
the James there's an infinite number of
aspects to everything you can't see one
thing from every angle simultaneously

and and perceive every single aspect
unless you are like mahavira you're uh
what is that TI tonara or what's the
other word

ah I can't remember it starts with a v c
no it's a cavalin Kali where you're just
omniscient and then you can see
everything from every single aspect
every single angle but we common
worldlings who aren't Jane kins or tier
toneras um you know we just see a table
from One Direction you know we just we
can't know everything there is to know
about something all at the same time and
so you have to you just have to take
everything with the grain of salt you

can't really know anything perfectly and so it's best not to adhere to like this is the way it is and that's that's like early Buddhism that's true like the stereotypical fool in Buddhism says only this is true anything else is wrong whereas some Jane pra following sead Vado would say well this is true but the opposite can also be true so yeah I I have read a little bit about Jane philosophy and that was interesting CAD wada or anonda I assume they're the same because they um keep the Venia seems to be uh describing the same thing that I was reading about in that Indian philosophy book many years ago so I'll just move on to keep the

vania's next question would you give food to none among Monks at an alms round I'm asking because her ordination was not in accordance with Buddha's Commandments um even if um these new bonies turn out to be I mean their ordination turns out to be invalid and I think that ultimately their their ordination is invalid still there are renunciant and it's good to see renuncian like the Buddha said you should support like if you converted to Buddhism from like jism you you should still honor your Jane teachers your your previous teachers you know you should still you know offer alms to any holy

person you know they don't have to be
ordained terraa Buddhist renuncian I
mean any you know any good-hearted
sincere

renunciant you know even if they're
belong to a different religion I mean
you're still earning Merit by helping
them and honoring them and respecting
them so

yeah I think I probably would unless she
was like really just wearing her bonei
status on her sleeve or

something but maybe even then I don't
know I've never really been in that I've
never really been in that uh

position but um yeah I mean if there was
some nun going along with with

monks um even if she was considering herself to be a bikuni um you know I might still give her food I mean she's still trying to practice dhama I assume she's still renouncing the world and you know really going for it so that's worthy of respect anyway so I'll just move on to keep the's next question and I think he asked more than six questions here that rascally fellow anyway his next question is during your time as a monk were there moments when you had almost no desires and were just peaceful yeah when you're

sound asleep that's that's that happens pretty much every night for just about everybody um but yeah I mean there's lots of times when you can I mean it might be of longer or shorter duration but I mean everyone's going to have at least flashes of that let's see almost no desires and we're just peaceful yeah it happens a lot actually I mean if you're just living out in the woods you don't have to work for a living you don't have any other people to interact with maybe just a scy dog that eats your leftovers maybe ants or Lizards or something you know you're just out there meditating that's like your job then uh there's going to

be a lot of times when you have almost no desires and are just peaceful I mean there's times like that now I I'm not sure what my desires are even at this moment other than just continuing with this

Q&A there's not very many desires at the present

moment so yeah I'll just move on to the next question here also from keep the do Buddhist temples in Southeast Asia have the same problems with child abuse as the Catholic Church um I've heard more I mean I lived in Burma for more than 20 years I spent only like three weeks in Thailand but I heard more about

that sort of thing in Thailand than I did in Burma the Buras are just not really a sensual kind of people which is one reason why they're not a very artistic people

um I mean it I heard one rumor about one monk that I knew who was messing around with it like an 18-year-old boy

supposedly I mean it was just gossip and the gossip did not come from a particularly reliable

source so I took that with a grain of salt you know I I really don't know if that's true or not but um yeah I I lived in Burma for I mean like I was living behind the scenes at monasteries for a lot a lot years and I never really heard

of a a serious case of this of like
monks or I mean they wouldn't really be
monks if they're screwing little boys or
you adolescent

boys because I mean once the penis is
inserted into an orifice just the to the
width of a sesame seed that's it you're
you're kicked out you're excommunicated
you're paraja even though you might
continue to wear robes and pass yourself
off as a monk in reality you're no
longer a monk

but um yeah I just I'm sure that it
happens you know I'm sure that there's
like like homosexual pedophile monks
that just don't restrain themselves you

know I've heard about that in Thailand more than I've heard about it in Burma even though I lived in Burma for many years like in monasteries so I'm I'm sure it happens but uh I don't think there it's anywhere near to being as rampant as uh in Roman Catholicism I don't know why that is I'm not exactly sure why Roman Catholic priests other than men who are gay who then join the church as an excuse for not getting married or something and then they just can't resist the urge to continue messing around with pretty boys or something but uh one one thing that the Burmese people are they're very stoic

people they're not as sensuous people
they're not a passionate people and so
there's just less of that you know
they're lower te I guess and so they're
just not as much of that and also I
guess they're more serious in their
Buddhism even even the sloppy monks they
they don't doubt that it's true whereas
I have no idea what's going on in the
minds of some of these Catholic priests
that uh I mean it used to be even worse
back in the Middle Ages there was I've
read I think it was in um viron
Russell's history of Western
philosophy how um there was like this
papal bull you know in the Middle Ages

where women

were not required to to make confession

anymore because so many of them were

being raped in the confessional booth

that it was just becoming rampant and

just out of control just the the

Catholic Church itself was just it was

it was sort of like civilization was

collapsing for a while and so um yeah

I've never heard about anything like

that in terraa Buddhism there's always

been sort of this serious sort of

ancient Indian athletic

ideal that has helped to prevent monks

from even seriously considering diddling

pretty boys but I it does happen but

it's it's way less prevalent than in

other

systems and then finally not the very
last question of all but the last
question of keep de vinia is is Arthur
schopenhauer your favorite philosopher
and no he's not I mean I like him all
right but I think I would like David
Hume better I prefer David Hume to
Arthur

schopenhauer so of of modern Western
philosophers I think David Hume would be
my

favorite he was a radical I mean he was
just I read this book um

human knowledge at scope and limits by
bertron Russell back when I was a monk

and I mean the title of that book could have been what do we do about the David Hume problem because David Hume was just destroying stuff that was just considered axiomatic before he came along like cause and effect he he just pounded away at the idea that just because B always follows A that it's caused by A that we don't really know that so I liked him just because he was a radical and also he said a lot of important stuff in one of his earlier his his earlier his earliest book his his magnum opus uh he was actually um favoring a kind of anatta that there really is no abiding self that stays the

same it's just you know mental images
and so forth Just rising and passing
away so let's see yeah I'm going with
David Hume I'm voting for him so I'll
just move on to the next question here
this is from the wisest and humble
Guru and he says after 30 years of being
a monk you think you could survive
sometime in a jungle or Forest without
having anything in military Wilderness
survival kind of sense well long before
I was a monk I mean like I like I said
before my father was like this Macho
tough guy and he taught me how to go
camping I lived in Pacific Northwest
which is I mean Washington state has at

least three national parks and just
state parks and Wilderness areas
everywhere just forests everywhere and
he taught me how to Camp it was just
minimalist you know we didn't use tents
I mean after about the age of five you
know we just I mean you'd bring a tarp
that you could string up just in case it
rained otherwise you just slept on the
ground he he had this um he he bought us
backpacks but he just had this thing it
was like a packboard it was a Trapper
Nelson packboard made out of wood and
canvas it had like moose blood stains
all over it because he used to use it
for packing moose quarters Out of the
Woods when he lived in Alaska and he

would just put everything into like a chicken feed sack and just lash it onto this instrument of torture that he would he would carry on his back but um yeah so even as a kid I was learning like minimalist like survival skills my father would teach me how to how to make GE four traps and snares you know how to how to survive in the wilderness essentially how to tie good knots which any anybody should know and uh as a young man before I was a monk I started buying like survival guides you know old Army Surplus Survival guides and just various survival guides I still have a few um e versions on this

computer so yeah I think I could survive fairly well um recently I was I've been watching the The Walking Dead you know it's this Zombie Apocalypse series and I'm just sitting there just from the beginning I'm telling him oh man you guys need walls what are you doing camping out in the woods like that I mean I mean look the zombie apocalypse you know is different than survival out in the wilderness necessarily I mean you got to have walls you gotta has has to be big enough that you can move around and maybe grow a garden inside but small enough that you know your little group is enough to defend it that before long humans are going to be more dangerous

than the zombies are which came to
pass so yeah I think I I do pretty well
in a in a forest with I don't know just
being completely naked you know like
Naked and Afraid where you just dumped
out into this forest with nobody to keep
you company but this other naked afraid
person plus you know the camera
crew but um yeah I think I'd do better
than most

people so let's just move on to the next
question this is from uh White Ash Piper
and seeing this question I realized that
I forgot to do a little homework for
this but anyway white ash Piper says
happy Q&A day poasa I believe you're a

proponent of the theory of evolution did you become one during your University days getting your degree in biology or before what do you think of the new discoveries from the web telescope and that's the homework that I I forgot to do is I really don't know what the new discoveries of the web telescope are I have been keeping up on the web telescope so with regard to that I don't think very much because I'm I'm oblivious but with regard to when I started favoring the theory of evolution I'm pretty sure it was before I became a monk I think the first really important book that I ever read in my life was the naked ape by Desmond Morris where he's

describing humans as a species of animal
how we're human beings even though we
think we don't follow animal instincts
that were just Laden with animal
instincts and it was really a humbling
kind of a book it wasn't necessarily a
book on Evolution but um I do think that
before I I was in university I did read
the Origin of Species by Charles Darwin
I read that fairly early on I think I
was a teenager at the
time and it just makes sense I mean
Evolution and just um like the fossil
record is is I mean obviously life has
evolved on this
planet regardless of what causes the

evolution you can say God's God is
driving the evolution you can say that
some kind of schopenhauerian will you
know it's just this this Consciousness
just striving to to survive and exist
and fulfill you know whatever niches it
can fulfill you know I mean it doesn't
necessarily have to be darwinian blind
trial and

error plus some sexual selection and so
so

forth but uh yeah I don't know exactly
when it was that I became a proponent of
more or less darwinian Evolution but um
you know as soon as I became aware of
the evidence that I mean it is pretty
obvious tell you the truth just the

fossil record itself is is like
overwhelming evidence that there has
been Evolution that that uh you know the
first four billion years of life on this
planet was just Anor robic bacteria up
until you get enough oxygen in the
atmosphere caused by blue green bacteria
and maybe some chemosynthetic bacteria
that you can start having like more
advanced metabolism and you start
getting um like
ucareo cells and then multicellular life
and so forth and you know the Cambrian
Evolution and and it's
like I I don't maybe I'm just babbling
but I mean it's it's obvious like the

older the rocks are the older the
fossils are you know the the less
variation you're going to have it's like
the oldest fossils are just like
bacteria and then you start getting into
like

primitive um you know very primitive
multicellular life it's long after the
bacteria showed up very primitive plant
life and and then it's like the first
probably most of the existence of fishes
in this world they were jawless you know
all the oldest the fossils of fish it's
just jawless fish because the lower jaw
hadn't evolved yet or hadn't appeared
yet so yeah it's even though I'm not a
materialist the theory of evolution is

is got so much evidence supporting it
that I mean as a worldly you know within
the context of samsara it's just the the
obvious Theory to support with regard to
how we wound up here I mean it could be
that it's like I did a a video with aan
Puna Damo maybe a year ago where he was
saying that you know just blind
darwinian trial and error and so forth
isn't sufficient to result in US humans
that there had to be like Karma involved
you know it's like some sort of uh
metaphysical like conscious Force
driving Evolution and that's fine I mean
but it's still the evolution is still
happening

regardless so I'll just move on to the next question here this is from mubo and I warned you in advance this is going to be a long one but uh maybe not nearly as long as I thought because we're well over halfway done anyways mubo says many supporters of mass immigration to the West characterize the phenomenon as karma for the West's history of colonialism in the third world this is particularly interesting as for the supporters of open borders immigration is simultaneously held to be an unalloyed good for society as well as some kind of karmic Revenge what is your reaction to the use the usage of the word Karma here well I think the usage

of the word Karma here is sort of like the usage of the word Karma on YouTube videos like Instant Karma you know somebody's doing something they shouldn't ought to do and then you know it's like it backfires on them and these people people really don't understand Karma they don't understand that karma is is a mental state that it's in the individual person you know individual person um yeah they don't know what karma is they just think that it's some sort of the the universe is getting revenge on them for their ancestors having colonized some new land but all lands have been

colonized you know even yeah I the only places in this world that haven't been where you haven't had a stronger tribe just invading and and like displacing a weaker tribe or absorbing the weaker tribe it maybe some remote Islands or this really remote desert areas maybe like the center of Australia or something um but aside from that everywhere else it's it's stronger people have moved in and taken over the land me taken it away from weaker people and that is a kind of evolution itself that's how societies evolve that's how the human it's largely how the human race evolved one reason why our Evolution happen so fast is because

we're just a warlike people and we just
out conquering weaker people than us or
at least our ancestors did

that so let's

see yeah I mean I wouldn't take this
very seriously about the supporters of
mass immigration um karma for the West
history of colonial I mean they're just
like they've got like this hysterical
blindness with regard to most of the
human race and most of the world they
just want white people to be the bad
guys and and because mainly just because
they're indoctrinated with this cultural
Marxism stuff where you know white
people have replaced the Bourgeois in

general as as the villain to be

overcome so it's just a bunch of lame

arguments

essentially anyways and the fact that

they consider it to be an unalloyed good

for society as well as some kind of

karmic Revenge well Ian it's just double

think it's a lot of indoctrinated people

will just believe you know too

essentially diametrically opposed

positions sometimes maybe even at the

same

time

so what is my reaction to the usage of

the word Karma here it's just an an

ignorant usage of the word without

really understanding understanding what

it means so I'll just move on to the
next

question this is from cricet and frog
song and cricet and frog song says is it
ever a good idea to make bad things
happen on purpose to expiate your
karma and that's essentially what the
Janes did or probably some of them still
do but in Buddhism no it's not a good
idea to make bad things happen on
purpose because when you're making
something happen that's karma too you're
just making more karma you know Karma
literally means making or doing or
acting action
deed

so yeah I don't think it's ever a good idea to make bad things happen on purpose to expediate your Cara I mean it just let it happen at its own rate that's the middle path really I mean that is the original or considered to be the original middle path you know in the first sermon of the damaka puut it's the middle path between self-indulgence and self- torture and the self- torture is what other sects were doing including the James and the aicas where they're making bad things happen to themselves they're torturing themselves and that's not what dhama teaches I mean it's just not good it just it's just making things worse

essentially because you're making karma
from deliberately hurting somebody
including deliberately hurting yourself
you're just making more bad caral by
doing

it so I think I'll just move on to the
next question here and this is a this is
a good one I got to admit this is a
juicy one this is from

Austin and Austin says my friend keeps
arguing with me about Karma and she
keeps saying these dead children in
Palestine did they just have bad karma
from a past life we just give reasons to
our life but it's completely meaningless
or you're victim blaming dead children

if you believe all suffering is caused
by your own

self and Austin continues here he says
and I don't really know how to respond
to these and they're all very sticky any
ideas I can't really rebut the idea that
these children are dying because they
did something bad in a past life Maybe
by rebut he means like like explain it
how it's oh it's true rebut means to
like deny or conclusively deny or
something but anyway with regard to one
thing that really sticks out for me is
this argument given by his friend you're
a victim blaming dead children if you
believe all suffering is caused by your
own self and that is like victim blaming

that's just a kind of slur it's like
someone who's
indoctrinated or a Normy and they don't
have a really good argument they'll just
fling a slur as a way of just like
causing a short circuit in the whole
thing and winning the argument by Def
fault it's like I mean a lot of you just
cons have experience with um you know
people using the term racist or sexist
or you know transphobe or homophobic just
as a way of just it's almost like
dehumanizing you it's just you know Nazi
fascist you know you're a fascist and
they don't even address the the the real
issue it's just that they think that

they're just like disqualifying you from
participating disqualifying you from
even offering your opinion by just this
sort of like the argumentum ad hominem or
something victim blaming I mean it
really is it's sort of like just calling
someone a racist or a fascist or
something it's they don't have any
better arguments so they just it's it's
like name
calling here it's not so much name
calling because it's like a verb victim
blaming you are victim blaming dead
children but I mean the fact remains
that we are creating our existence I
mean someone like this is a materialist
they think this world is

reality they don't think that we're creating our own reality um regardless of how true that is like eart TOA in his in his F her his first famous book The Power of Now he's talking about someone who's unhappy and they're like raging against the world or raging against this or that really it's it's as though they're standing in a mirror raging at their own reflection because this world is like a reflection of our inner experience so I mean you'd have to have some kind of metaphysical argument with this person a metaphysical debate against materialism because they seem to be like materialistic realists you know

or scientific realists something like
that so I mean if they want to call it
victim blaming so be it I don't give a
[_] if they call it victim blaming
because the fact remains that all
suffering is ultimately
self-inflicted although there is no self
I mean even so in in like a worldly you
know W har Des all Dua is volitional and
self-inflicted although it's it's very
tricky if you're a kid and you're being
abused or you know being shot by an
Israeli soldier or something I don't
think the Israelis are actually shooting
kids it's just that they're bombing
buildings that contain kids but still I
mean when you experience the pain then

um most people are not sophisticated
philosophically enough to know that pain
and suffering are two different things I
mean they can both go by the term Dua
and

poly but or hurting in English or
something but still pain is just a
physical sensation and the suffering
comes from wanting that sensation to
stop and also it's just one way of
looking at Karma I mean it's not
necessarily all from past lives is I
mean anything that happened in past
lives especially according to Orthodox
terraa has no power at all because it no
longer exists all that exists is the

present moment and we are creating that
just through a kind of karmic
momentum so it's we've got it inside us
and it's just we're just manifesting
this world and I mentioning I think it
was possibly the last Q&A I did it's
like dreaming
that this is just like a higher level of
dream this is not Ultimate Reality but
if you're having a dream at night in
your sleep you think that it's real
while you're dreaming it and then when
you wake up you realize it wasn't real
but also very few people nowadays would
deny that we are creating our own dreams
not very many people nowadays would
think that some deity is implanting

those dreams into us maybe a Muslim who
thinks that Allah is really all powerful
you know they might think that their
dreams are caused by Allah but most
people in the west you know it's
just we are creating our own dreams and
we are creating this
dream and it's just like kids especially
they're just not very good at driving
their their Cosmic vehicle yet I guess
some some people just people in general
so it's not so much that you know you
you mess something bad happens to you
because you were a Roman soldier 2,000
years ago who helped butcher a barbarian
Village it's it could be that you're

just not skillful you know you're not fully awake you know you're still fairly ignorant with regard to what reality is and isn't and so you're just messing up you know you're you're creating this reality but still um and it's it's mainly in accordance with your karma I mean it is in accordance with your karma but your karma is this this will shopen howan will just moving forwards through time

and it's hard to explain so let me get back to these uh these arguments here one argument these dead children in Palestine did they just have bad karma from a past life well not necessarily from a past life but uh yeah there is a

good chance of it I mean that would be like the main Buddhist explanation is that lifetime after lifetime they're doing good deeds and bad deeds and both good deeds and the bad Deeds create this you know it's it it just adds into your stream of of your volitional Consciousness and it's going to have effects and even though they can't remember their past lives well that's just because you know they're not fully awake yet and it's it's too bad really I mean just you look at just the horror of what has happened in this world since human beings have been here I mean it's always there's always bad stuff

happening and that's partly because
there's also also good stuff happening
that they it all has to balance out in
the long run but anyway Let's see we
just give reasons to our life but it's
completely meaningless well that's an
easy argument to refute because even to
have a concept of life itself is is
meaning you know I mean if everything is
meaningless then yeah I mean you you
just you might as well be just blind and
deaf and mute and
numb so it's it's not completely
meaningless because we have to give
meaning to it I mean meaning is some
sorrow to the extent that we are stuck
in samsaric pseudo reality we're

surrounded by meaning because that's
what samsara is perception is meaning
you know you're giving meaning to
something like the earlier question
about you know you got the the
perceptual field and then just
immediately you're you're adding putting
labels or meanings on the things and
that's

samsara so

we just give reasons to our life but
it's completely meaningless I mean that
itself is it just seems to me to be
blatantly false I mean that's kind of
existentialism right there or again it's
it's like scientific realism they just

say oh El this world is here just
through random chance
and you know we're just meet robots you
know so these questions I mean the dead
children in Palestine did they just have
bad from a past life for the most part
from the Buddhist point of view yeah
with the regard to the second question
we just give reasons to our life but
it's completely meaningless i' call
[__] on
that I mean there maybe what this person
is saying that there's no completely
meaningless in the sense that there's no
ultimate underlying meaning and I would
agree to that because Ultimate Reality
is meaningless you know samsara has

meaning but but reality doesn't because
meaning is just like a symbol that
represents something else but this
person seems to be completely stuck in
samsara and so everything that they're
dealing with is meaning it's not
meaningless they might say that it's
completely meaningless but they don't
know what they're talking about because
their world is composed of meaning you
take away the meaning you take away some
sarry you take away this world no more
meaning no more
world but they're like a scientific
realist and with the victim blaming part
well I mean that's not scientific

realism there that's just going along
with sort of

modern sort of uh attempting to refute
something by just coming up with the
convenient

slur but in a way it kind of is victim
blaming but in a way there are no
victims because we're all creating this
for

ourselves you know all suffering is
self-inflicted so where's the victim and
just maybe the just a deluded person
which almost everybody is that they're
hurting themselves without even
realizing it and

then and then I guess you could call
them a victim of their own their own

predicament but I mean it's not they're being real in reality they're not being victimized by some outside force human or

otherwise so anyway again Austin

concludes this question by and I don't really know how to respond to these and they're all very sticky any ideas I can't really rebut the idea that these children are dying because they did something bad in a past

life well I mean if you're going to try to have an argument with someone who is just convinced that like modern liberalism is the enlightened View and scientific realism describes reality you

know it describes this world and our place in it then you're going to have to completely reprogram them before you can really make any Headway with any kind of Buddhist

argument because they're just living in a in a different Paradigm you know they've got a completely different set of explanations for reality or a very different set

anyway and like I'm just not a materialist so I mean a lot of their arguments wouldn't even really apply but I mean if you're going to have a debate with them then you got to have some Middle Ground you have to agree on certain basic points before you can have

any kind of meaningful debate otherwise
you know if they're just
convinced that you know scientific
realism is the ultimate truth or that
the Bible is the ultimate truth then I
mean you just kind of wasting your
breath trying to argue with these people
unless you can they're they've got
enough open-mindedness that they're able
to at least meet you halfway and you
have to meet them halfway of
course but yeah this looks like a no-
win scenario here because I don't think
you're you're really going to win any
argument um with a person who's just
like a scientific

materialist they they probably won't believe in karma at all even if karma is just volition I mean if you Define karma as

volition you know monks I say that karma is volition or volition is karma then uh yeah at least you can kind of get your foot in the door you know you say karma if you say that volition exists then you're saying that Karma exists because they're the same at least according to Buddhism then the ball would be in their Court to try and say that no bition isn't Karma but I don't know how they would do

that so yeah there's all kinds of bad things happening sorry to say so anyways

now we're getting going to have a a few
technical questions from nature cure and
then that'll be it that'll be the end of
the thing so we might be about two hours
which is kind of normal actually despite
the fact that I answered about twice as
many questions as

usual so anyway nature cure

says in samut nikaya 25 dhamari and

sadari cannot die without becoming

enlightened or would become enlightened

before they die how should one

understand understand this well my

understanding is really that damari and

sadanari very likely were not taught by

the Buddha at all that it's sort of a

later development by monks with too much
free time and just too much of a a
passion for philosophizing and cooking
up system

myology so damari and sadanari

um they can be any kind of Arya they can
even be a soda but apparently they're a
kind of soda if they're a soda they're
the kind of soda that is going to become
enlightened In This Very life and what
causes them to be that way is

some some law of the universe that Abid
dama Scholars deal with a lot and
commentators deal with a lot but which
never can really be explained as to why
it has to be that

way but uh yeah I mean dhamari and

sadanari

how should one understand this I mean I
I wouldn't even bother you know I mean I
don't consider it to be dealing with
reality it's sort of like arguing about
whether the Holy Spirit emanates
directly from the father or whether it
emanates indirectly from the father
through the son and there were people
like killing each other in like the the
late Roman Empire just over that very
same that very same debate and there's
no way they can really know I mean how
how would anyone going to know about
damari and sadanari without being one
and I'm not sure that I've ever met

one so yeah I mean don't take everything
you read in the
texts very seriously there's a lot of
really valuable information just
profound wisdom in the poly Tex and
there's a lot of silliness in the poly
Tex too and there's a lot of just like
hyper
intellectual attempts at just working
out these elaborate Scholastic systems
that you're going to find in the text
especially in Abid dama and the
commentaries but in sutas like this
you're going to find it
also so anyway I'll just move on to the
next one which is along the same lines
in the maim Naya number 70 the K giri

suta it mentions seven different Aras or something could you please explain this and again I've never really been interested in this sort of thing but I just happen to have the Buddhist dictionary which any serious uh student of terab Buddhism should try to get a copy of this I mean they're sometimes they're handed out for free distribution I think this one was free but anyway you look

under Arya pugula or

Arya and section B here talks about the Sevenfold grouping of the noble disciples and it is as follows one the faith devotees or the

sadari is that that mentioned here yeah

sadari that is the faith devote two is

the faith liberated one or the sadawi

muta three is the body witness or Kaya

saki fourth is both ways liberated one

UB

but five is the dhama devote or dhari

which is the other one that was on the

the previous question six is the vision

attainer

D seven is the wisdom liberated one or

the

paut this group of seven noble disciples

is thus explained in wisi Maga

2173 and I don't know I mean I guess

might as well let's just go for it let's

just wait into this so according to the

wisi Maga these seven different kinds of
Aras is one he who is filled with
resolution or aduka and in considering
the formations as impermanent or anicha
gains The Faculty of Faith he at the
moment of the path to stream winning is
called a faith devotee or sadan
usari at the seven higher stages of
being an

Arya then he is called a faith devotee
wait at the seven higher stages he is
called a faith liberated one or simota
which means that a nari according to
Orthodox terraa would exist for only one
trillionth of a second because the very
next because that's only when you reach

the first stage of stream entry which is the path to stream entry that's Mega but when the very next moment according to Orthodox tradition like Abid dama in the commentaries the very next moment after you reach the path you go to fruition so according to this um when you first become a soda when you hit the fruition or the the path stage of being a sodana then you're called a sari but then after that you're s wiut or liberated by faith and that starts the very next moment so why even bother to even have I mean according to Orthodox terava you got for the four stages of ARA Hood you've got um two two stages you got path and fruit path and

fruition

so you got Sodapop path soda fruition

sakagami path sakagami fruition anagami

path anagami fruition and then arahant

path arant fruition that's where they're

talking about the eight noble ones when

it's talking about eight instead of

seven is talking about these four kinds

of Aras with each having like path and

fruition for each one and according to

the Wii

MAA and and furthermore like I already

mentioned that the the path stage lasts

only like a trillionth of a second it's

only one moment why would you even

bother saying that such people are

worthy of of like reverence worthy of
offering gifts and so forth when they
exist for like a trillionth of a second
I mean you wouldn't even be able to
start bowing before they stopped being
that and started being something else
they would have hit the fruition
stage so sadan usara here lasts for like
a trillionth of a
second okay so anyways three he was
filled with tranquility and in
considering the formations as miserable
or Dua gains The Faculty of
concentration he in every respect is
considered as a body witness or kayas
saki he or four he however who after
reaching the absorptions of the

immaterial sphere has attained the
highest fruition of Holiness he is a
both ways liberated one or ubat
bagaut five he who is filled with wisdom
and in considering the formations as not
self or anata gains The Faculty of
wisdom he is at the moment of stream
winning a dhama devote or dhama
nari seven at the highest stage a wisdom
liberated one and that's it well further
details about the body witness the both
ways liberated one and the wisdom
liberated one look under the three poly
terms um in in this dictionary so so the
both of these that he was talking about
in the previous one damari and Sari

according to Orthodox tradition they
exist for like a trillionth of a second
and then they move on to being something
else so why even bother to put a name on
these people it's

just it's this kind of thing has never
really struck any kind of traction with
me I've never really taken it seriously

I've never really believed it I mean

I've never really felt the the urge to
believe it's like should I believe this

it's just it just strikes me as false

immediately or just as just Superfluous

just unnecessary it's just all this

unnecessary gobbly go that nobody needs
to know

this I mean you certainly don't need to

know it in order to become

enlightened so yeah so I would say that

majaya number 70 the K sua is a rather

late

suta so anyways I'll just move on to

Nature Cure's next question

question which is to become enlightened

one should listen to dhama talk from

enlightened one is it

legit how should one understand this

well you obviously don't have to listen

to a damat talk from an enlightened one

in this

life maybe the implication is that at

some point in in your countless zillions

of lifetimes at some point in the past

you must have listened to an enlightened person like G Buddha in this life he became enlightened without hearing a dama talk from an enlightened one because he's the person who reinvented Enlightenment according to tradition you know dhma had died out and then he's the one who rediscovered it not reinvented it but rediscovered it so he he but nevertheless in past lives he encountered fully enlightened beings like uh when he was the uh the recluse Sumo he uh he met deonar Buddha pretty sure if I remember my mythology right and so you know he he met with an fully enlightened Buddha you know many countless eons

ago so that was good

enough so yeah you don't have to listen
to a dama talk from an enlightened being
in this life and good luck finding one
although there's plenty of people who
are considered to be enlightened eart

TOA AES

Shanti uh yeah lots of

them so yeah I mean it doesn't refer to
this life it helps I mean if you can
find an enlightened being um yeah
definitely listen to what they say and
take it

seriously but uh let's just assume that
in some past life because we've had an
uncountable number of them we came

across an enlightened being at some point or another and then we heard a d talk from them I hope instead of we just like said bad things to them and like drove them away with a stick or something so finally the very last question from nature cure and from everybody the very last question two hours into this thing is soda P's maximum seven rebirths sakagami is one rebirth is it a legit thing to believe and I've discussed this numerous times um the earliest texts soda apparently doesn't mean like some kind of uh someone who has like superhuman attainments a soapa originally probably meant that someone

had entered the stream of dhama sort of
like a born again Christian or someone
who has been just newly converted
they're full of Faith you know and in a
way they're kind of you know guaranteed
not go to hell or get bad rebirth just
because you know there's such a they're
a believing sincere DH practice
practitioner but the maximum seven
rebirths and so forth um and like
glimpsing nibana so that they're like
the the lowest form of
sainthood um yeah I am skeptical of that
and the earliest texts don't mention
sakami at
all and the earliest text like the first

sutas of I think it's the Ed Wuda refer to anagami apparently in the sense of enlightened beings and it does make sense an anagami is one who does not return therefore you would assume that originally an anagami was an enlightened being but arahant you know like I was saying earlier in the earlier text you've got more diversity of terms and then eventually the Buddhist philosophers settled on you know one standardized term for each meaning and so uh sometimes it results in like repurposing of old terms so yeah I really do not follow the four stages of sainthood one reason why I don't follow the four stages of

sainthood is because it seems to be only Buddhists who talk about this that the four stages of sainthood I'm unaware of any other uh wisdom tradition you know like the contemplative orders of of Christianity or Hinduism or any other any other spiritual system mentions these four stages and a Buddhist could just smugly say well that's because they just never get to that to that level but I don't believe that at all I think there's very good chance that there have been fully enlightened Hindus fully enlightened Christians even and uh they just don't have any concept of that I St John of the Cross did have the

concept of the like the beginner the Adept and the perfect which correlates to the Buddhist concept and the terab Buddhist concept of the putuj the Sea and the AA so something like that where you can triangulate you can have two different systems just independently of each other probably came up with essentially the same system that would kind of put it on firmer footing that you know maybe there is really something objective that that that is based on but the Buddhist four stages of St Hood as far as I know it's uh peculiarity of Buddhism and uh I don't think that Buddhism has a monopoly on enlightenment I think it's one of the

best systems for enlightenment you know
designed for enlightenment but um I
don't think it has any kind of Monopoly
on it and so yeah the whole four stages
of saood like I've said many times
before I really don't take it at face
value I think it started off as having a
different meaning and then gradually um
as the philosophy got you know
formulated and evolved and systematized
and everything it came to mean something
else
so that's it I'm
done and uh if you have any questions
you're very welcome to ask and I'll
answer them in my new studio which will

probably be uh fixed up a little better
the next time because we're still in the
process of getting things set
up and uh look look at the URL links
below if you please and subscribe and
like this video If you please and I
think there's a good chance that I'm
going to be starting to upload stuff
onto Rumble soon um partly just because
YouTube is starting to get snotty and
and like not letting people watch with
with an ad blocker installed and I just
commercials just demean my dignity I
just have loed commercials since I was a
teenager and uh maybe I'm just too cheap
to to pay for the YouTube
premium but uh anyways be

happy

hello and welcome to episode 68 of
question and answer and I am your host
poo Bosa coming to you from this
room and we have got a merciless
onslaught of questions this time it is a
veritable zombie apocalypse of questions
and so I suppose I should just take a
sip of my sweet
tea and weigh right into
this and the first question is from the
ARA s
project and the ARA sasti project says
considering that rebirth is a real
phenomena and I've just got to stop
right here considering that this fellow
calls himself the Arya sasti project

with sasti being the first two syllables
of the word

sastia I just gotta just go to make a
statement here and that although I am
not a national socialist or an advocate
of national socialism nor am I an
advocate of any kind of fascism really
nevertheless I am a grammar

Nazi and

phenomena is plural if he's talking
about singular it should be considering
that rebirth is a real
phenomenon

non so that said I think I'll just start
over here the arus sasti project says
considering that rebirth is a real
phenomena what kind of parents would you

prefer to be born to in your next

Incarnation what race ethnicity economic

status geographic location personality

traits other siblings or other factors

that are important to

you that's kind of an interesting

question I assume a lot of people um

that believe in rebirth consider this

sort of thing a lot of Asian Buddhists

they have an idea in their head that at

least they want to be richer or higher

class or you know better looking or

whatever in their next life but from my

point of view really any choice you make

like any conscious choice that you make

with regard to what your next birth is

going to be like is actually going to be counterproductive because I mean it's your comma that decides what birth you're going to take and so you wind up with the birth that you need the most you know it's like the birth that is most appropriate for you is the one that's going to happen sort of like people like praying to God asking for things when of course God knows better than you do what you need and although Kama isn't God nevertheless it is kind of creator of our existence or our seeming existence and so I mean your Comma just left to its own devices to just do its own thing is going to make a better choices with regard to what your

next life is going to be than any
conscious or I mean at best
semiconscious um Choice you're going to
make ignorant of what you've been
working on Life After Life you know what
it is that you really need to face you
know bad things that have to happen to
you as kind of wakeup calls or ways of
like course readjustments and that sort
of thing so I mean I'm just content to
let you know comma take its own course
and I'd just be reborn in whatever would
be the life that I was most in need of
that is most appropriate to my
situation um nevertheless I mean
assuming that you do have some kind of

choice I mean I would like to be at

least

reborn

into you know a family that isn't in

like really a bad situation you know I'd

rather not have a a

drunken violent person as a father and

just like a prostitute as a mother that

sort of thing but again I mean if that's

really what my that's really what I need

then I mean so be

it sometimes I have considered that in

the past I did have somewhat of a choice

uh like in ancient times to be born in

Greece or India and I made the mistake

of choosing

Greece but I mean maybe not I don't know

anyway I'm just going to move on to the next

question and this is from Indiana DH formerly known as the anti-marxist league I think he is still known as the anti-marxist league in some circles so let's just call it an

alias and Indiana dhama says based on your previous answer I should probably cease selling items on Ebay is that correct or is there some Nuance to be more specific I usually sell old DVDs and books that my brother provides well this is sort of a followup on a question he asked in the previous Q&A about wanting to renounce the world in a

secular manner without being ordained into a monastic order that he's going to just sort of become more or less of a meditative recluse and just renounce the world that way and so this is sort of a followup on that and I did mention in the previous Q&A that uh if you have to work for a living you know you have to make money then getting into like sales and marketing and that sort of thing would probably not be your best bet because I mean you don't want to get sucked into some Sor and greed and just keep interpersonal interactions to a minimum especially with worldly normies but but selling items on Ebay it seems like

it's not the same as being a used car
salesman they'll tell you what I'm going
to do that kind of thing or you know our
prices are so low they're
insane you know that kind of stuff is
not

daric but just selling something on eBay
I mean all you're doing is it's all done
like remotely pretty much as far as I
know you just State a price you know
somebody is willing to pay that price
and they do the transaction like
electronically so I mean that's
relatively innocuous that's seems
relatively harmless to me as a way of
making a living so long as you're being

honest you know you're you're charging
what you consider it to be worth that
sort of thing

um and not having to haggle too much so

yeah I don't see any real problem with

that so I'll just move on to Indiana

dh's next question here and these are

all with with regard to his plans on

secular renunciation and his like

process that he that he's already begun

with regard to secular renunciation and

again I congratulate him for deciding to

renounce some

saric nor me

Dum so his next question is I have two

trustworthy siblings who would be

willing to manage my money would this be

advisable as part of secular
renunciation well it would be more of a
renunciation if you're not handling
money that uh you know monks aren't
supposed to touch the stuff except under
very rare
circumstances um apparently even Jesus
at times at least in in the gospels was
telling his his disciples or his
Apostles not to handle money although
that's kind of ambiguous because in
other passages they they are handling
money but um yeah I mean if you could
get them to handle your
money um that would be fine although you
have to be careful about not handling

money like indirectly by proxy like
handling the people that handle money
and that's what monks generally do
you're not handling money you're
handling the money

Handler and uh I mean if you take that
too far you might as well just be
handling the money yourself because if
you're getting like picky and fussy and
just m causing headaches for the person
handling your money you know you're not
being easy to support

um you're not content with whatever
comes your way you know they they give
you you know Frosted Flakes and you you
like get upset with them because you
wanted Frosted Mini Wheats or something

then you're better off just handling
your own money that's one thing as a
monk that

um it was a kind of aesthetic practice
or something where you just have to get
used to it you just have to accept that
you're not always going to get what you
ask for they're going to give you the
the wrong thing something you didn't
want and you don't complain about it you
know you your amongst duty is not to be a
burden on the people who are supporting
him so you got to keep that in mind and
I'll just move on to the next part of
this uh multiple part
question I no longer own a TV should I

also get rid of my radio I occasionally
listen to local news
stations well I mean the closer you come
to sensory deprivation and solitary
confinement the better I suppose um the
radio is samsaric it's like samsaric
propaganda you know everybody on the
radio with few very few exceptions is
just accepting some Sara as reality and
you know their narratives like the news
news broadcast and so forth you know
they're just trying to sell you on the
idea without even realizing that they're
trying to sell you on this that this
samsaric clown
show is
reality so it would be a

more strict form of renunciation not to listen to the radio and then of course music um you know from the Buddhist point of view music is just Indulgence in sensuality and a distraction news also like monks in the text I mean technically I'm pretty sure it's not against vinia rules it's not against the rules of monastic discipline for monks to talk about politics but repeatedly in the texts there are lists of what is uh Tira Chana via or like animal knowledge and talking about Kings and wars and and like government government officials and so forth like politics essentially is considered to be

animal knowledge animal

talk

so I mean it would be a stricter form of
pronunciation not to listen to the radio
radio or watch

TV so we'll just move on to the next
part of this

question what practices other than
meditation could be helpful for a
secular quasi

renunciant and aside from what I
mentioned in the previous previous

Q&A one really important practice that
is largely ignored even by veteran

Buddhists outside of say the Hy
tradition is mindfulness of all

activities so it's like when you you you

you want to stand up let's say you're
sitting in a chair you want to stand up
first you note the desire to stand you
note the muscle movements in standing
you know the the changes in pressure
like on the bottoms of your feet and
like on your knees and so forth maybe
the the cloth the clothing brushing
against your skin just the the motion
involved in standing up that sort of
thing you're going to turn your head you
you notice the The Urge or the desire
the intention to turn your head then
like the sort of like the oily feeling
in your spinal column you know as you
turn your

head things like that and if you really want to Rob yourself of almost all enjoyment of food practice mindfulness of eating which is an aesthetic practice because really robbing yourself of one of the few Pleasures still allowed to you is pretty aestic so you don't just dig into your meal you know it's like you're mindful of seeing the meal in front of you you're mindful of like the hunger like increased slobber in your mouth you know you're mindful of like your arm reaching with the fork you know maybe the the coldness and hardness of the fork against your hand you know the the muscular movements muscular movements of like you know getting a

scoop of whatever it is you know
bringing it retracting your arm back to
your mouth just the the sensations of
the food in your mouth then the
mindfulness of the chewing the feeling
of the stuff turning into this gooey
slobbery mush in your mouth the
intention to swallow the the sensations
of the swallowing just repeat repeat
repeat until the food is gone um that's
it's tough to do because naturally you
want to enjoy your
meal and just observing you know all the
phenomena involved in you eating your
meal it it just pretty much it's a buzz
kill essentially so that's just uh being

mindful of all of your activities which is very much stressed in the texts and probably a major part of the the meditative practice of monks in the Buddhist time was really just going through life with Sitis just sis essentially you know when you turn your head you're you mindfully turn your head when you reach out with your arm you mindfully reach out just throughout the day just not just when you're sitting on the floor and meditating you know with your eyes closed but just throughout the entire day you're mindful of everything that's coming up and that is a very powerful practice so yeah that's something that

you could try to cultivate I would I
would highly recommend that so we'll
just move on to the next question this
is from White Ash

Piper and white ash Piper said I watched
your talk on Dua the other day perhaps I
need to watch again but my question is
on passion or in PO beaga is it desire
to be or to have passion for example a
vocation or Hobbies art would this or
could it lead to desire and Dua this one
question is it desire or this this
sentence is it desire desire to be or to
have passion I don't fully understand
that maybe it's just I'm too much of an
autistic grammar Nazi that um it it's it

does not seem to be completely
grammatically

uh I don't know what the word is and I
don't want to say the wrong word because
of the the state I'm in so let's see
raaga is talking about

passion and is it desire to be or to
have passion well passion or Raga

usually is translated either as passion
or as lust and it really means like a an
intense desire or any intense emotional
state that would be

raaga and monks are supposed to have as
little of that as they can manage so um
calling like for example a vocation or
Hobbies or art um you know it's it's
sort of like a an English idiom to say

you know like art collecting is my
passion or drawing is my passion or
playing the piano is my passion um but
that's really not what the Buddhist
texts are talking about they're talking
about any intense desire or intense
emotional state and it could be that
people just get into intense emotional
states over collecting baseball cards
but such people are are best avoided I
think um but yeah anything that you feel
strongly

about um yeah that's that's like Raga or
it can be and it it leads to dooka I
mean the only thing that you really
should feel strongly about is just you

can have like a a passion for meditating
you know a passion for studying Dharma a
passion for for just practicing towards
you know greater wisdom greater
understanding and ultimately
Enlightenment and eventually even that
passion has to be like go of but it can
be like your last valid passion before
you let go of all passion it's like a
lot of people they just replace all
their other passions with religion or
you know practicing Dharma and then
finally they realize that that's their
last stumbling block this passion
they've got for it this clinging to
dharma is like the last obstacle they've
got to Enlightenment So eventually they

have to let that go too but I mean you don't want to let go of the raft before you get to the other side so I hope I asked answered that question because I'm just moving on to the next one this is from Athena sigil and Athena sigil says as I'm watching you and no he says as I'm watching and you're discussing both Donald Trump and then various meditation techniques and observations a question popped in my mind what do you think of Sam Harris he claims to be a fairly consistent meditation practitioner and also one of the biggest sufferers of TDS that I've ever seen what are your

thoughts on him well I have to admit I have not watched or listened to Sam Harris in years back around 2015 16 when I was first getting red pillled I I used to watch Sam Harris on YouTube and I mean I'm no expert on Sam Harris um he's an intelligent guy he talks slow which seems to make him seem more intelligent or something although of course Ben Shapiro talks fast and he's intelligent too but um it's my understanding I could be wrong but it's my understanding that Sam Harris is one of these sort of like Steven Bachelor who wants to take dama and just take out all the stuff that is not compatible with modern

Western scientism and then use dhama especially meditation as a kind of psychological self-help technique that you know they just kind of dismiss the whole idea of Liberation from dooka and and ignorance and so forth and they just say well at least it improves the quality of your life it improves your understanding um so so good for that so uh with regard to that I would say I mean to the extent that someone is rejecting the metaphysical aspects of Dharma and just accepting Dharma as a kind of worldly self-help technique you know that's compatible with Western Scientific realism and so forth then

yeah they're definitely missing the boat
to some

degree U to the extent that they accept
dhama that's good but to the extent that
they reject it that's not so

good and uh with regard to his TDS I I
stopped listening to him before he
really went off the deep end with regard
to just passionately despising Donald
Trump uh he may have disapproved of him
back when I was back when I was watching
his videos but um yeah I mean there was
some some to do lately or not lately but
you know maybe a year ago where he was
saying that um I mean it's worth it to
rig elections just to keep Trump from
winning winning an election you know

that even if the the elections were
rigged that it's good to the extent that
they prevented Trump from becoming
president like back in

2020 um yeah I mean he caught a lot of
flak for that and uh rightfully so I
suppose but um I guess he's a I guess
he's like a leftist sort of like a a
Bill Maher

kind of liberal or something you know
that that still votes

Democrat even though the Democratic
party has largely abandoned them sort of
like the Republican party has largely
abandoned you know globalist neocons
even though there's still a lot of them

up in the ruling hierarchy still the the masses that are actually voting Republican just despise them and the masses that are voting Democrat or at least lots of those masses just despise the oldfashioned classical liberals who are now considered to be far-right extremists I mean I'm um I've got a Discord server a lot of people are on it and we took um like the political Spectrum tests and I mean most of us are considered to be right-wing we're I mean we're just called you know extremists and Nazis and stuff and most of us were almost in the middle so like like someone who's almost in the middle nowadays just based on like classical

distinctions between left and right now
were considered to be farri extremists
you know like MAA Republicans or just
people who support

Trump whereas actually the left has um
way more left-wing extremists than the
right has right-wing extremists in
America as far as I have

seen so that's what I think about Sam
Harris which isn't very much because I
stopped watching his videos years ago I
mean he does have some good things to
say

but it's about as far as I'll far as
I'll do far as I can go I don't know I'm
I'm sort of having trouble with my words

today I think so the next question is from Austin and Austin says did the Buddha have bad karma when David did that caused him to bleed and if so does the bodhisatta carry negative Karma over lifetimes of rebirth well this is like two questions so I guess I should separate them I'm separating them now they are now separated so first question did the Buddha have bad karma when David did that caused him to bleed and the Orthodox statement is a fully enlightened being makes no new Karma but they still have the residual karma from their past that is still working itself out even though the

person is now enlightened so the Buddha certainly had bad karma you read or at least in the past I mean you read some of the jataka stories and I mean he's not always a saintly sage in in these stories I mean usually he is even when he's an animal he's a saintly Quail or a saintly fish king or something thing but uh so the Orthodox Orthodox answer is you know he had done bad things in the past you know they might have been millions of years ago but the karma had not yet reached fruition and uh so that kind of stuff comes up you know bad things happened to the Buddha he got sick sometimes you

know I mean he went hungry sometimes
they were like famines in the Buddhist
time you know he wasn't getting enough
food some times I mean he was causing
bad things to happen to himself when he
was doing the the six years of self-
torture you know the
duia so yeah he had bad karma in his
past from before his Enlightenment that
was still just sort of running itself
out for the rest of his life along with
mostly Good

Karma but some bad karma in there too I
mean Maham Moana I've pointed this out
many times Maham Moana who was the
Buddha's left-hand man one of his two
Chief disciples I mean he was literally

murdered I mean he was according to the text he was literally beat to a pulp so that he did not have an unbroken bone left in his body and he was fully enlightened he was a great disciple so it's not that he was creating Bad Karma after his Enlightenment he wasn't creating any Karma after his Enlightenment even just the the lowest level of arant is no longer creating Karma but still you've got this residuum of sort of karmic effects that that are still you know associated with your personality and so forth that still work themselves out um I could come up

with hypotheses of my own that are not Orthodox whereas you know there an enlightened being I mean there's really nobody there so that it's the people around him it's their karma that are largely determining what's happening to the enlightened sage and so it may have been the Bad Karma of some of his followers that caused him to meet with these mishaps but that is not the Orthodox answer to that

question and so I'm going to move on to the second part of Austin's question here which is and if so does the bodhi SAT carry negative Karma over lifetimes rebirth and yeah I pretty much already

answered that the answer would be yes
that would be the Orthodox answer is yes
yes so I'll just move on to the next
question here which is from cak and sead
zida and cak and sead Z
says is it possible to meditate or
practice in any way while
reading well I mean obviously if you're
reading a dhama book or any book that's
got profundity to it you know spiritual
or philosophical
profundity then contemplating that
profundity while you're reading is a
kind of low-level meditation some of the
the 40 standard uh types of meditation
or you know a kind of like intellectual

reflection you know you're still
thinking so I mean there could be that
kind of low-level meditation um you
could probably take it up a notch by
reading Zen Coons you know read the
mumon con or the hian Roku or something
where you know it's just pretty much
hitting you with with meditative Coons
while you're
reading um you know read eart TOS The
Power of Now or or just read a few
verses from the DAP and just contemplate
those although most of the contemplation
will happen after you read the verses I
guess and also of course you can just
take it to the level of just being
mindful of turning the pages I mean I've

done that before you know you're reading
a dhab book and when it's time to turn
the page mindfully reaching mindfully
lifting mindfully turning and uh of
course if you have to swallow while
you're reading you mindfully swallow
your slobber you know you can mindfully
observe these kind of things I mean at
one time I had this remarkable
experience I was in rangon walking back
and forth in a driveway with one of my
supporters and we were just having a
conversation and I was so used to
meditating at the time that even though
I was holding up my end of the
conversation quite well you know I was

fully fully there to that extent
nevertheless my main concentration my
main um like my primary object was like
the movements of my mouth and just sort
of the vibration in my my vocal cords
while I was talking I mean that was like
my primary object and I'm just watching
nature take its course as I'm as you
know the meat Poppin is holding up its
end of this conversation so to some
degree you can do that while reading but
it's trickier if you're reading or
talking being mindful because all the
words and perceptions and symbols and so
forth tend to be distractions you have
to attend to to the meanings of things
which is taking you out of any kind of

deep mindfulness or

meditation so I'll just move on to CAC

Z's next

question which is kind of a long one

because it's got a long passage in it

and it is as

follows according to

majima 7even on the gradual practice of

a monk the Buddha says he starts off

monks in a in an order of practice first

Sila then sense restraint then

moderation in eating then vigilance then

SI s then overcoming the Nar then J some

seem obvious but some seem confusing for

example how is s s a different practice

than sense restraint I thought they were

the same practice what is its function
here later on and how do we practice it
how should we lay people carry out the
instruction to have moderation in eating
oh that's another question here I got to
separate

these okay let's just let's see he's got
a number of questions that are
uh

okay so what is the function here later
on and how do we practice it so
originally sense restraint it can just
mean just

avoiding like commotion you know you're
going out alone into a forest I mean
that's a kind of sensor stream because
you know you're getting away from all

the commotion of a village or a town and
you're going out into the relative
emptiness of a forest and you're just
living a kind of life you know a moral
life where you're just avoiding
excessive sensual stimulation so that
could be what he means by self-restraint
here um you know it's just like you're
just paying attention to living your
simple life and you're not paying
attention to all the other things you
could be paying attention
to that I assume would be the meaning if
they are different if it is
differentiated from
s because s it's it's like I was talking

about earlier SAA especially is
everything that you're doing you're just
paying attention to the sensations
involved and not spinning off into
elaborate commentaries in words you know
you're just trying to be as immediately
in the present moment as you can without
lots of running commentary without
labeling things if you can manage
that

so yeah that would be my guess I haven't
read the sutta to like do my refresher
course on maim minaya

107 um but the Buddha did give it like
the gradual discourse where he'd start
with Elementary things and then get more
and more advanced as as the uh the

discourse progressed um this could be something along those lines although this isn't just a gradual discourse this is gradual development of of monastic practice

so yeah I think sense restraint first CA then sense restraint then moderation in eating yeah I think since it's in between two relatively Elementary practices the sense restraint here probably would just mean you know going off to a quiet place with not much commotion going on and just living a life that doesn't have a lot of commotion going on you know just simplify your life simplify the stimuli

that you're exposed to I assume that
would would that's just an educated
guess so I'll just uh move on to his
next sub question here how should we as
lay people care carry out the
instruction to have moderation in eating
well don't eat until you're stuffed you
know eat for the purpose of keeping
yourself healthy not for the purpose of
sensual
pleasure and like as a monk especially
as a young monk I had to chant this
thing on a daily basis you know among
eats not for the purpose of self-
beautification not for the purpose of
enjoyment but only for the purpose of
keeping his body healthy so that he can

continue practicing dhamma also
one meal a day or at most two meals a
day is plenty for someone who really
wants to to be a hard noosed with regard
to moderation and
eating and uh just eating not being
fussy with your
food that sort of thing so I'll just
move on to the next sub question here
and finally the part about vigilance
says quote come you Monk dwell intent on
vigilance during the day while pacing up
and down while s sitting down cleanse
the mind of obstructive mental States
during the middle watch of the night lie
down on the right side in the lion

posture foot resting on foot mindful
clearly conscious reflecting on the
thought of getting up again during the
last watch of the night when you have
Arisen while pacing up and down while
sitting down cleanse the mind of
obstructive mental States what is this
part talking about is it giving us a
kind of schedule that we should practice
in it's hard to decipher what the
schedule is and what it is telling us to
do but I want to try to copy this in
entire and the entirety of the gradual
practice well that passage caused me a
lot of trouble when I was a young monk
because one of the implications of it is
a monk sleeps only four hours per night

because it's like the three watches of the night the first watch of the night I mean you're just doing sitting meditation and walking meditation the second watch of the night you lie down on your right side get four hours of sleep because half of the night you know if you just take 24-hour day half of that is night supposedly so you got 12 hours you divide it up into three that's four hours per per watch so the middle watch you know from like 10 p.m. to 2: am. you lie down you sleep on one side with just your intention like as you're falling asleep is just to I mean you're intent upon waking up again so that you

can continue your
practice and it's not everyone can do
that I mean
if your meditation isn't going well or
you're just as sleep ahead and just by
your Constitution you need plenty of
sleep then you can just start
hallucinating you can start dreaming now
just through sleep deprivation you're
you're giving yourself four hours of
sleep per night then I mean you can just
start like hallucinating just you're
just starting to dream while you're
still awake just because of your your
brain or your mind's need to dream for
the purpose of this Pro processing
information and so forth because dreams

are there for a kind of I mean they've got survival value from evolutionary point of

view so yeah I mean the main the main point of all this is the first watch of the night the first four hours you're practicing diligently the second four hours you sleep as I mean as little as you can manage just because it's interfering with your practice you know like you shouldn't be sleeping when you could be practicing but of course you do need some sleep and so you know the ideal is like four hours per night and it was only one month in my entire life that I was able to average less than

four hours of sleep per night and that was during some of the best meditation of my

life so the better your meditation the less you need to

sleep just maybe just because you got

less to process because your mind is

just so clear and relatively

empty

so yeah and then and then as soon as you

wake up you just dive back into

practicing again so that's pretty much

what it means so we'll just move on to

se action CAD Zen as's next question

although he kind of cheated a little bit

by asking several sub questions in that

one oh that rascally coac and CAD Z

now so his next one is the fourth the four path model of Enlightenment is something that is not early according to GC Pond but there are early sutas still where people have the undefiled vision of dham or damaku or damaka I should say is that right no damaku the dama I where they realize that all that is subject to arising is subject to decay whereas in many other Traditions you might be considered enlightened already with this like the people who claim to not identify with the body or intentional actions but in Buddhism this is just the first step it stops people

from thinking they have completed the
holy life and not be complacent thoughts
or thoughts because there's a question
mark at the end of thoughts um yeah it's
it's like in the texts when somebody has
what is

called let's see what is

it h where is it the undefiled vision of
dharm is you know whatever has a
beginning has an end you know like in
that sequel to the to the

Matrix whatever has a beginning has an
end Neo and that is like um that Vision
where you realize that you you you

firmly realize it not just like you

accept an intellectual proposal but you
really see it clearly you know it really

hits you that that is sort of

um the

stereotypical attainment of ARA hood you

know you've you've become an Arya at

that point you're you're a Buddhist

saint that is destined for enlightenment

within X number of lives you're no

longer gonna to backslide into like

ghost Realms or go to hell or anything

like that

so whereas in many other Traditions you

might be considered enlightened already

with this I I don't know of any TR I

that would say just realizing that

whatever has a beginning has an end um

would be considered

Enlightenment like the abrahamic religions would just clearly reject that because according to them or most of the followers you know God creates you out of nothing so you got a beginning but you don't have an end because you're going to spend forever and ever in heaven or

hell so Buddhism differs from the abrahamic monotheistic Rel religions in that regard um I don't think Hinduism would would agree with it so I'm not sure exactly what relig other spiritual Traditions he's referring to um yeah I don't I don't think that it would be easily confused with being fully enlightened I think someone who

has reached that point would realize
that they've still got some progress to
make you know they're not you know
abiding in in Bliss

247 so to

speaking

um

yeah okay so I guess I answered that
question I'm not 100%

sure and uh maybe I should start
adjusting the blinds because I've got
like these horizontal bars of light
going across me

now so yeah let's do

that just a

minute that's

better okay so now for another question
from covac and sead
zida he says I read that unlike other
schools even though the Salona say that
there are six kinds of Consciousness the
chaika are not a separate reality like
in Abid dama but rather just different
modes of the cheetah they claimed this
because the Buddha called the six senses
all so rejected the Aggregates or
anything else including nibana as real
existences do you think their
classification of chaas like this is
more in line with the sutas or did the
Terra get this one right well I do
remember in AK wers history of Indian
Buddhism which I'm pretty sure I got

back there on the bookcase he does say that uh terada and Sal Trona and I think he named one other one that I don't recall off off hand they were some they were like the most conservative schools of Buddhism they came closest to what early Buddhism was teaching in C Trona um they had the advantage of not having an Abid dama at all like santica is just following the sutas the sura in santica means

Sutra so they were following a kind of Sanskrit but uh and not poly but still they rejected Abid dama and just adhered to the suta Traditions which was a plus for them I think so the S Trona say

there are six kinds of Consciousness um
yeah Terra will I mean the sutas do say
that you know you got eye Consciousness
ear Consciousness nose Consciousness
tongue Consciousness body Consciousness
and mind Consciousness so that's six
kinds of Consciousness but in Abid dama
I mean it's all just Consciousness it's
it's different flavors and then they
they even divide it up into over a
hundred different flavors of
Consciousness different like subtleties
or differences that this in the form
that Consciousness
takes but still the in Abid dama you
know according to Orthodox Terra it's
all just one cheetah one mind one

Consciousness and then they say that there are 52 different chetos or mental States um and then according to him i' I've never really studied C Trona philosophy I've you know read about C Trona but um you know I haven't been reading this stuff like covac and sead zida does he's coming up with uh a lot of like early extinct Buddhist sects and like studying their philosophy which is good I might add but uh it may be that a lot of this just hadn't been published yet at the time that I was a monk studying dhama so yeah I mean six's kind of

Consciousness even Terra would agree
with that to some degree because because
you know eye Consciousness ear
Consciousness Etc but still according to
Abid dama it's all just Consciousness
and then but then he's saying that
according to cell tronas the different
mental states are not separate realities
but rather just different modes of mind
and I would tend to agree with that
because my whole idea that I've been
going with for a long time isn't that
Consciousness is one Ultimate Reality
and the different mental States
including stuff like wrong view I mean
according to Abid Dum one of the 52
ultimately real mental States is wrong

view which is just
strange but anyways I consider
Consciousness to be like the essence of
mind and the mental States the
perceptual mental states are just
different forms that this Consciousness
takes you know it's like glass would be
the essence of this glass of sweet
tea and just the the the container the
beverage container which is also called
a glass unfortunately for this for these
purposes I mean that's the form but you
can have something else is made out of
glass you can have glass astay glass
window pane
Etc but it's all made of

glass and yeah I would agree that different mental states are all made of Consciousness that that's the ultimate essence of the mental state assuming that it has an ultimate Essence would be Consciousness so I think I would be more inclined to side with the salonas than I would with Abid dama claiming that there's 52 ultimately real mental States different kinds of mental States including wrong View and even saying that perception and cognition are two entirely qualitatively different ultimate realities I mean that was one of the first I think it was the first philosophical DH essay I ever wrote was it was inspired by me trying

to figure out me I mean how do you what comes first when you direct your attention to something is it the volition or the perception I mean if the volition comes first I mean you're directing your attention towards something you don't even know it's there yet because you haven't perceived it but in order to perceive it I mean there'd have to be some focusing of attention and so I mean they have to be simultaneous and they can't arise separately you know they all have this they both have the same you know the same object so why even call them two different things I mean they can't you

can't possibly have one without the
other you know they're always
simultaneous at the same moment in in in
time the same point in space assuming
that mind even occurs in space I mean
why even bother to separate them they're
just two aspects of the same thing and I
think the C tronicas might actually
agree with that just based on their
study of the the
sutras rather than coming up with this
Abid dama philosophy that has some
wisdom to it but it also has a lot of
stuff that I just think I just consider
to be
false
so yeah so I

think um the cotrona classification of
chaas according to the
description by covac and cot Z yeah I
think it might be more accurate than
Orthodox Terra with its Abid dama
philosophy and its division of you know
100 what is it 128 ultimate realities or
something like that so so yeah I'll just
move on to the next question this one is
uh and Now for Something Completely
Different this is from Stevens and
Stephen says how do you make your French
toast and I am somewhat renowned for my
French
toast I might make some tomorrow in
fact so it's uh you just uh take some

eggs raw eggs preferably pour in a
little milk beat it up with a fork and
and then you you kind of whip in some
nutmeg and cinnamon the nutmeg is
important don't leave out the
nutmeg then you get some good bread you
dip it in this stuff and you fry it if
You' got like bacon drippings you know
bacon grease that you can use to grease
the pan that's that's good um otherwise
you can butter vegetable oil it's really
not that important and then after you've
got it nicely golden brown on both sides
because you have to flip it over
once then you take it off and then you
put it on a plate and then you you have
chopped strawberries I almost always put

chopped strawberries um like bacon like
little crumbled pieces of bacon that's
good too it's not absolutely necessary
but it's definitely nice add some animal
protein just protein in general and it's
good if you've got crumbled bacon like
if you get the Costco kind that comes in
a bag to just fry it up a little bit you
know kind of make it a little crunchier
and something you know just make it seem
like it's fresh bacon you sprinkle that
on there butter you have to put the
butter on first I guess before you put
on the strawberries and the crumbled
bacon and then you pour some syrup maple
syrup over that and then you put some

whipped cream on top and then you devour
it the devouring part is important don't
forget that part otherwise it's it's all
in

vain so I'll just move on to the next
question here this is from pseudonym
which as I say as I've said before it
probably isn't his real

name pseudo pseudonym says the purpose
of these five precepts aligned questions
is to explore to what extent Mo extend
it's extent I'll start over the purpose
of these five precept align questions is
to explore to what extent moderation has
sway with regard to the five
precepts

so what are your thoughts regarding a

sincere householder who is committed to the five precepts who purchases meat at the grocery store so I mean I suppose I should get into something here that there is a difference between real morality and precept just following rules I mean they can both in poly they can both go by the name of Sila you know Poncha Sila the five precepts or silata parasa is adherence to morality and observances which usually means just adhering to rules but not necessarily so well I mean usually according to the terab commentaries it means something completely ridiculous

like like imitating dogs and cows and
stuff but we don't need to get into that
so but there is a difference between
rules on the one hand and actual
morality on the other and these five
precepts

um even though they're they are based on
morality that the five precepts
themselves are just
precepts and

the the morality is I mean there's more
subtlety to morality than there is to
just you know I undertake the the
precept to avoid you know Onslaught on
living beings you know that's that's
like a sentence that is trying to
crystallize a certain

moral uh idea but still there's going to
be much more subtlety to the actual
comma of your volitions because I mean
your volitions are very subtle and and
like Mercurial what's the word that's
just

changing like uh who is that the god
that never mind there was a Greek god
who lived by the ocean he was sort of a
sea

god uh proteus Protein that's the word I
was trying to think of so your mind is
protein it's it's like changing and like
all these mixed like mixed emotions and
and like mixed motives and everything
just it's it's a

mess and so a precept just following a rule it's not going to be able to handle just the the sheer complexity and subtlety of your motives in your mental States when while you're performing actions

so rules are one thing actual morality is something else there's going to be a certain amount of overlap I guess

depending on how you look at it I mean you want to see rules of just sentences then yeah there's not even going to be overlap so what are my thoughts

regarding a sincere householder who has committed to the five precepts who purchases meat at the grocery store most devout terraa

Buddhists by

Meat and they don't have a problem with

it because they've

interpreted the the five the first

precept of not killing as not killing

it's doesn't have anything to do with

not

buying it's not killing but if you're a

western who thinks too much and you're

just thinking well I mean I'm endorsing

killing it's you know it's like voting

in favor of killing animals by buying

this

meat then maybe they have a problem with

that and to some degree you have to come

upon like an acceptable interpretation

of the rule for yourself that might not be the same as somebody else's interpretation but at least it makes sense it's an honest interpretation and then you try to follow that I think that would probably be the best approach to take or if you've got a teacher like a monk who you take the precepts in front of you ask him what what is the meaning of it and then you can follow his interpretation but there's going to be different interpretations especially now that we're living in the postmodern West rather than in the ancient Ganges Valley and so you've got sort of eclectic minded westerners who think differently than an

ancient Indian

villager or even a modern Burmese

villager for that

matter so

so I think I kind of answered that one

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

next one here what are your thoughts

regarding a sincere householder who is

committed to the five precepts who

prefers dealing in cash to avoid paying

taxes well that's that's a little

trickier because avoiding taxes and like

customs duties um it can be regarded as

a kind of stealing like um a monk who

smuggles something through customs so as

not to have to pay customs duty

that that's that can be part of jaica he
can be excommunicated for life for
stealing because what's it sunka Gata
parika or something like that if I
remember the poly right it's not just
necessarily stealing something I mean if
you are like swindling the government by
not paying what you are what you legally
owe then that can be considered a kind
of

stealing so you'd have to be a little
more careful with that um I mean you
start off with the the plain meaning and
then if there are
um like textual like in the poly texts
precedence for something that isn't
clearly defined by the rule to be part

of that rule to be included under that rule then you should accept that I guess if you're a devout terot Buddhist so but nevertheless I don't think it's illegal to just sell your friend like some old stereo speakers for 50 bucks and not declare that on your income tax I don't think that that is illegal so long as you're not like

illegally like committing tax fraud or just refusing to pay the taxes that you legally owe but like a waitress who's getting tips and isn't declaring all of her tips I mean I don't think the IRS really cares I mean nowadays it's mostly on credit cards so that they pretty much

have to because they got records of it but still um yeah to some degree just people like neighbors or friends buying and selling amongst themselves is not illegal so I guess you'd have to just make sure that you're not actually breaking the law with regard to avoiding paying taxes and I think so long as you're not actively breaking the law that you're doing okay so I'll just move on to the next one which is what are your thoughts on regarding a sincere householder who has committed to the five precepts who indulges in pornography well like I was saying towards the beginning of this answer or this series of answers that the rule and

ethics or morality are not the same
so you can not be like being you know
having promiscuous or adulterous sex you
know you might not be breaking the third
precept but still if you indulge in
pornography there's going to be a
certain amount of Raga or lust and
desire and so forth which dhama
discourages so it would be unethical
even if you're not breaking the
precept so I mean you have to bear in
mind that Buddhist ethics is a much
broader spectrum and much more
comprehensive than just these five
rules um some commentators some monks
will say that all of Ethics is contained

within the five precepts but

I'd say probably it's more true the

other way around the five precepts are

contained within the broad spectrum of

morality I mean I don't know depends on

how you look at it I suppose but with

regard to yeah a sincere householder is

committed to the five precepts who

indulges in looking at pornography um

regardless of whether he's breaking the

third precept or not I mean he's still

wallowing in

sensuality so I mean just because it not

clearly against a certain rule doesn't

mean that you should just go ahead and

do it I mean there's even vinea rules

that don't exist that maybe should exist

I mean there's certain things monks can do like

cussing or just playing cards for match sticks you know gambling for match sticks so long as you're not using real money you know that kind of thing that I mean there's no rule against it but still I

mean um it's pretty clear that the Buddha would not have encouraged it in any way so I'll just uh move on to the next one here what are your thoughts regarding a sincere householder who is committed to the five precepts who tells White Lies to avoid conflict and prevents suffering well yeah he's still

breaking the rule there as long as he's
telling lies regardless of their color
then yeah he's he's still you know sort
of like

killing you know animals to avoid
suffering like like he's killing lice in
his kids hair you know he's just like
catching them and you know doing
whatever you do to lice that you comb
out of a kid's hair um I mean he's still
killing even though he's doing it for
the sake of preventing suffering in his
child and perhaps the whole rest of the
family if the lies spread to other
people so yeah I mean you're still
telling why lies so someone who is
committed to the five precepts would

either tell the truth or remains
silent and then of course there's lawyer
speak where you're technically telling
the truth but I mean it's might not be
entirely honest like let's say you know
that uh Bob stole something at work and
then you can completely truthfully tell
your boss well I know it's either Bob or
Joe who stole it and this way you're
you're casting shade on Joe even though
you know he didn't steal it but it's a
factual statement that either Bob or Joe
stole the stuff even though you know
it's Bob but you throw Joe in just
because you don't like him or something
then yeah I mean that would be even if

technically it's not breaking a rule I mean it's still unethical so you have to be careful about I mean you shouldn't just adhere to rules that cata parasa that's like an obstacle I mean you should really have a more subtle and sort of a broad vision of Ethics so okay here's another one this is these are all from pseudonym what are your thoughts regarding a sincere householder who is committed to the five precepts who occasionally succumbs to his culture's Norm of having wine with dinner well he's just breaking the rule I mean he might not be doing anything necessarily wrong you know you have one glass of red

wine with your spaghetti I mean you're not going to get drunk off just one wine unless you're a total lightweight so it's against the rule but I mean some things there's rules especially for monks there's rules of monastic discipline that have nothing to do with morality you know a monk eats food in the afternoon he's breaking a rule even though there's nothing inherently immoral with eating food in the afternoon he grows his hair too long or his fingernails too long or he's got protruding nostril hairs he's breaking a rule even though there's nothing immoral about that

so with regard to having a sip of wine I don't think there's necessarily anything inherently immoral with taking a sip of wine I don't particularly like wine so I'm not really tempted to do it but still it is breaking the rule so if this person is committed to the five precepts then he shouldn't have a glass of wine with a spaghetti period so I'll just move on to the next question here and this is from Arin and Arin says it seems much of what the Buddha taught was directed at monks and not lay people can you give us a definitive way to tell the difference since many of the teachings seem to directly conflict with

the life of a

householder well most sutas are directed
towards

monks um there are a few sutas directed
towards lay people one of the best known
is the sealo W Su I don't remember what
number you know I don't remember the
exact location of the sealo

wuta but um you look up sealo wuta and
it'll have relatively detailed

instructions for how to be a good

Buddhist lay person but the thing

is I mean ethics are ethics I mean you

don't have like one set of Ethics you

might have one set of rules for a monk

and a different set of rules for Lay

person or precepts but you don't have one set of ethics you don't have one kind of ethics for monks another kind of ethics for Lay people it's just that lay people cannot be as ethical as monks you know they've got families to protect you know they've got stuff to do they got money to they got bills to pay you know so I mean the stuff directed towards monks is still true regardless of who reads it it's just that uh you know way there's this artificial distinction between monks and lay people between renunciant and householders who enjoy pleasures of the senses and um so there's like two different sets of rules or something but I mean this the

philosophical ethical stuff is true just
across the board it applies to everybody
it applies to frogs it applies to to
dava's and Heaven

Realms

so ative way to tell the difference
since many of the teachings seem to
directly conflict with life as well the
five precepts obviously the the three
refugees um and also texts like the
seala watas Su I'm sure if you if you
look on the internet you do a search for
like Buddhist texts or sutas poly sutas
directed towards lay people then you'll
find them and um you know it'll be lots
of instructions there but most of the

stuff is directed towards monks not because it's directed with regard to monks rules but just because is dealing with advanced level ethics that most lay people really are not in a position to follow you know like jna for example or just being mindful of everyday activities I mean there's nothing really preventing a lay person from being mindful of everyday activities other than the fact that they're surrounded by distractions and they've got a much more complicated life so that trying to be aware of every intention as it arises and you know every muscular movement and so forth is just a Herculean task so yeah I guess a definitive way to

tell the difference
between what the Buddha taught and
directed towards the lay people versus
what he taught towards mon is just you
know read the seala W suta and uh maybe
look on the internet for you know a list
of the sutas that are directed towards
lay people but lay people obviously can
derive benefit from reading stuff that's
directed towards monks because most of
it um I mean especially the ethical
stuff it is just Universal it applies to
everybody it's just that monks are able
to follow it more successfully as a
general
rule so I'll just move on to the next

question here and this is from ride
forever

and ride forever says and this is kind
of an interesting question I've
considered this like years and years ago
while living in

caves RI forever says what is the point
of practice if there is no individual
who would practice or benefit from it
doesn't really make sense if there is no
individual there is no need for practice
and nobody to be duded and nobody to
Suffer Well that is true but the thing
is um the delusion still exists even
though I ultimately do not exist as an
individual still I may be delusional and
think that I exist as an individual in

which case I mean I might as well really exist because so long as I believe that I exist I mean I'm still subject to Karma I'm still subject to you know being rewarded for doing good and being punished for doing bad through karmic retribution I mean you can say it doesn't really matter what happens to me because I don't really exist by the same token it doesn't matter if you burn in hell for millions of years and if you're willing to have yourself even though you're not ultimately real you know you're not an ultimately distinct individual being that is just ultimately

real in and of

yourself I mean if you're willing to

burn in hell forever then even though

you're not ultimately real it's going to

feel real you're going to think it's

real so long as you are delusional so

you got to have to cure yourself of the

delusion before you are you stop being

like deeply invested in what happens to

the meat

puppet so I mean if you're just so

detached from the meat puppet you know

you don't consider it to be you you

don't consider the ego to be you then I

mean it doesn't matter if you burn in

hell or go to heaven but you're not

going to burn in hell because

you're so detached I mean you're
practically a
sage

so yeah it's like in reality it doesn't
it doesn't make any there's nobody to be
duded and nobody to suffer but
obviously I mean people think that they
exist and that person that they think
they are suffers and is diluted and may
wind up in a hell-like
existence and and ultimately maybe it
doesn't matter at all because none of it
is real but it damn well seems real
doesn't it and I think ride forever here
is uh maybe taking kind of an
indirect approach to attacking the whole

idea of self of anata in in Terra

Buddhist

philosophy but um even though there is no self people I mean most people in samsara believe that there is one and so what seems to be happening to that self might as well be real and so you have to practice to transcend that delusional belief and I hope I answer that question but it is kind of a subtle one I mean I have gone through phases as a monk where it's like you know I just don't care I mean it doesn't even matter whether I'm happy or not it doesn't matter if I go to hell or not you know it's just it's just irrelevant I mean it just doesn't matter so i' I've gone through phases

like

that but uh that the phases generally don't last very long so after you've plopped yourself into hell and then you change your mind and maybe it starts mattering to you then you're screwed so I'll just move on to the next question here and this is from Al bakina and uh I just I say the last I usually don't say last names but I don't know maybe he's like Arabic or something you know so that the AL is just uh like a what the the article definite article but uh like Al Jabar or something but let's just call him Al so Al says what are your thoughts on Fallon

gong and I really don't know much about
fulong gong it's just outside of my
sphere of of in interest I guess you
know it's it's a
Chinese more or less Buddhist sect
that I mean they
meditate and obviously they're on the
wrong side of the Chinese Communist
party because the Chinese Communist
party wants you know worship of the
Chinese Communist party to be the only
religion and so I mean they really they'
got pictures of XI Zin Ping On you know
like replacing the Buddha on Buddhist
altars and like they've got to change
the words in the Bible so it doesn't say
anything bad about the Chinese Communist

Party even indirectly that sort of thing
so I guess the fallong gong are too
devout in their spiritual or religious
beliefs for the tastes of the Chinese
government and so they're
allegedly just arresting them and
harvesting their organs or at least they
have done that from time to
time so that's about all I know about
Fong gong I really don't know what
exactly they believe what kind of
meditation they practice anything like
that it's just
in the news you hear about falong gong
being persecuted by the Chinese and
occasionally arrested as essentially

Political Criminals and pretty much cut apart and sold for their

parts so I guess I'll just move on to the next question and this is from

Indian guy Alias

Trevor an Indian guy says how did you shower or stay clean in the forest are you allowed soap and stuff

well um sometimes it is kind of a challenge to stay clean if you're just living in a cave or a Rock Ledge in a forest you're not even staying in a monastery most monasteries of course will have a well or some way for the monks to take a bath and uh usually it's not

showers um I mean there's like the the ancient way of showering the like just the way of bathing in Burma is as far as I know the same way that people were bathing in the prehistoric indis Valley Civilization because they found the bath like the bathing rooms you of you know the ruins of haraa and moyno daro and places like that where you just got this water tank and and like a big bowl and you just scoop the water out of the tank and pour it over your head and that's how you take a bath that's common throughout southeast Asia I'm pretty sure and it works so I mean if you if you're staying in a monastery you'll

have either a bath house or at least
you'll have a well there and if you
don't have a bath house then monks are
pretty much required to uh keep their
lower robe on when they take a bath and
so like when I was living out in the
forest um usually I'd have to take a
bath in the morning because I take a
bath in the morning and then I have to
hang up the robe that I was wearing
while bathing to let it dry so that it
wouldn't be wet when I go to sleep at
night although if I did have an enclosed
bath house you know someplace where
people couldn't see me I could just take
a bath naked the way most of westerners
do um when I was just living out in the

forest like when I was living in Alando
kasapa National Park in Northwestern
Burma there was just a creek I think it
was pone Creek pone J and yeah I'd have
to wear my lower robe usually usually I
mean there's a few times I do it naked
right around dusk when nobody could see
me but um you know I usually take a bath
in the morning I I uh I lived in this
like under an overhanging Rock Ledge
this huge thing that I I lived under and
then like once a day right after I would
eat I'd go down to the creek and do
water things which included filling my
water bottles brushing my teeth washing
my bowl taking a bath and so forth and

so so I would just uh climb down there
was a deep part in the in the creek that
was maybe belly deep and I just climbed
down into that and you're I soap is
allowable um perfumed soap strict monks
avoid that because the use of gongha or
perfumes any kind of scent that smells
nice is forbidden for monks and so I
would usually ask for just this rough
like lie soap or there's also this stuff
called carbolic soap that it's sort of a
red color and it has this strong
chemical smell that is not perfumey at
all and I would generally use that um
and it's allowable to keep soap although
I had this friend who was super
aesthetic he was like a Buddhist Rambo

he lived in a cave in Thailand and he showed me his cave once I looked and it was just like pitch black and he thought it was Paradise but he could not even keep soap he couldn't keep anything because rats would just chew it up he uh slept in a hammock and uh just to keep himself above the rats I slept in a cave one night near his cave and he told me you got to keep yourself covered from head to toe with your robes or the rats will bite you and I had rats on me that night definitely didn't get much sleep that night needless to say but he he was not allowed so so he

just bathed with water I suppose which
is good enough I mean you just bathe
with water every
day and uh you know keeps most of the
dirt off you you might have a little
natural skin Grease still on you but uh
that's that's fine it washes off the
stink you know the sweat the salt that
kind of thing
um really though in in according to the
rules of monastic discipline I mean
based on the rules of monastic
discipline monks were really under
ordinary circumstances they were only
allowed to bathe twice a month so they
got pretty stinky I would imagine that
was one of the first rules to start

start having like loopholes so you don't have to follow the rules so strictly that's that are built right into the rules like in the in the Venia text themselves it says that this rule that you're not allowed to bathe more than twice a month or under ordinary circumstances it applies only to the Ganges Valley to the middle the middle country and that people who live beyond the Ganges Valley can take as much as they want which probably was monks including senior monks who doing some editing of the titica just really not liking only being able to bathe twice a month but yeah it is the lble own soap

but strict monks don't own nice smelling soap they get the the stinky stuff or the odorless

stuff and uh there were a few times I was actually able to take showers when living in the forest and that was that during the rainy season or after it would rain hard when I was living under that rock ledge at the in the National Park

um there was a waterfall that would fall over the like one side of the Rock Ledge and uh I mean it kind of hurt you couldn't get directly underneath it because it was in free fall for like 30 or 40 feet and by the time it comes down it's like pounding you it it kind of

hurts but you could get in the spray
kind of to one side of the main
waterfall and it was good enough to to
bathe in and then sometimes like in
southern Burma like mon state it rains
so hard during the rainy season that you
can just take a shower just standing out
in the rain it's it's like a shower
coming down and it's relatively warm
too but uh yeah I mean I guess I
answered that question in maybe
excessive detail but yeah you are
allowed soap and you can pretty much
bathe as much as you
want so I'll just move on the next
question this is from

Mambo better take a drink before I wait
into this

one okay Mambo says hello poo what do
you think are the factors which
gives grammar Nazi again is which give a
religion not which

gives I'll start over hello poo what do
you think are the factors which give a
religion an advantage over other for
examp example you said Hindu yogis get
more closer to get more closer to

Enlightenment due to them having no
handbreak practice wise let's just
assume that mugambo is speaking English
as a second

language and no disrespect to Mamoo here
I'll just start over hello poo what do

you think are the factors which gives a religion an advantage over other for example you said Hindu Yogi get more closer to Enlightenment due to them having no handbreak practice wise are you more convinced by ideas of let's say ADV vant due to it coming from positive Place meanwhile Buddhism deals with negation and cessation of everything which makes us human I personally watched some advit lectures and could understand how it could be more alluring and simple like a preacher preaching in church plus it's poetic and Buddhism is more dry and methodical like an experiment would you consider other

paths like vant or jism in future thanks
well I wouldn't I would not consider
jism I really do not think it is as wise
in its approach as Buddhism ver it
believes in a soul you know the Jaa
which is weighed down by like sticky
almost material K Karma that holds you
down from floating up into heaven and
living in Eternal Bliss and then just
the speeding out the karmic process by
torturing yourself I assume most Janes
don't do that also the belief that um
even killing an insect accidentally is
Bad Karma so that you know a lot of them
will have like this soft grass broom
that they sweep a path in front of them
before they walk some of them even wear

like like the face diaper just so they won't accidentally inhale an insect you know at least inhale it into their mouth and thereby killing it I I assume a lot of you have been running especially as kids you know through the forest or something with your mouth open and all of a sudden you've got a mosquito in your mouth yeah that's they would consider that to be you have done something bad and you just made Bad Karma by doing that so yeah gism really doesn't appeal to me much uh ADV V dant if I for some reason I was not allowed to be a Buddhist I think ADV V dant would be my second

choice because it's really not that different and they borrowed ideas from each other first ADV bant was borrowing ideas from Buddhism and then it started going back the other way after i b vant s of became firmly established in Indian philosophy so I'll just get back up towards the top here I said Hindu he says for example you said Hindu yogis get more closer to Enlightenment due to them having no handbrake practice wise well that's not exactly what I said they get closer to like total Purity I mean you can never totally arrive at total Purity unless it's through um like you know the miracle of Enlightenment or something and even then to the

unenlightened Observer you're still
going to be impure because they're going
to be looking at you through impurity
colored
glasses but what the Hindus do is they
just keep it's like they have this idea
that Enlightenment is upwards just
through more and more and more Purity
whereas Buddhism is more philosophical
in the sense that at any stage on the
path you know any any step on the ladder
you can just bail out sideways so you
don't have to be as advanced as a Hindu
Yogi who can perform Miracles and he can
read minds and so forth you don't have
to be that advanced to be enlightened

you know to just get off the wheel

Buddhism has like the advantage I think

of just being able to bail out

sideways so that may have been somewhat

of a misunderstanding and see are you

more convinced by ideas of let's say

advice do it coming from a positive

Place meanwhile Buddhism deals with

negation and as well positive places

and negative places are both essentially

invalid because the truth is neither

positive nor negative nor positive and

negative nor POS neither positive nor

negative you know it's just the absolute

just transcends Duality including the

duality of positive and

negative so

the sensation of everything which makes
us human well ultimately we aren't human
because we do not ultimately exist as
any species any any
individual so yeah adite to D I mean
it's like I say it would be my second
choice after Buddhism I mean it would be
I'd choose it over some kinds of
Buddhism but um you know like
Terra I'm pretty much committed to that
and it's not like I I regret being
committed to that Ian I chose very
carefully because it was most in tune
with my personality with my temperament
with my Constitution and so forth um
yeah it was a careful choice and I think

I made the right choice although I mean
Zen I liked to Zen although they've got
a little bit too much pure land stuff
mixed in and just way too many
ceremonies the Bowing and the chanting
which I've never really liked very much
um and they just deviate from what the
Buddha taught to somee agree with regard
to their scriptures and so
forth um but advit vant is good I do
like Adit
vant um but not as much as I like
Buddhism just because I'm just sort of
relatively
cold philosophical type of person more
than an emotional Faith oriented person
you know I've got more the scientific

temperament than the artistic

temperament so to

Speak

so but Raja yoga is is good I've yeah I

do I do admire and respect it and also

what Gana yoga just the the The Yoga of

knowledge I I've gravitated towards that

too i' sometimes I used to joke that I

was a I was a Gana Yogi just trying to

be a Raja

Yogi you know just being sort of an

intellectual philosophical person trying

to just avoid philosophy and just you

know just go into just like practicing

towards Clarity of mind which leads to

mysticism because my intellect finally

told me that mysticism is the route to
go so I guess I answered that question
and so I'm gonna move on to the next one
this is from nature cure and nature cure
said is Buddha sasana 5,000 years thing
legit

to believe can we trust mahak kasa's
words or mahak kasa's word is also
written by later commentaries but Buddha
clearly said 500 years so the Assumption
here is that mahak kaspā said that when
the Buddha said that Buddhism would
survive for only 500 years that it
really meant 5,000 years and I am
unaware of mahak kaspā ever saying that
um there could be some tradition that
mahak kaspā is the one who came up with

the five 00 means 5,000 Theory but I mean that's just out of the commentaries that's like Buddha Goa rather than mahak Kasa saying that when the Buddha said Buddhism would last for only 500 years that you know the true teachings the true

Dharma that what he meant was 5,000 years which makes no sense whatsoever it's just a really bad COPE in a way um because I mean it had already lasted five more than 500 years by the time uh the commentaries were composed in in poly um

by Buddha Goa and

Company so yeah I'm I'm I don't think

mahasa had anything to do with it it's just that in the text like in the in the rules of monastic discipline in the Vinaya there's the scene where the Buddha's and and stepmother because his father married two sisters his aunt and stepmother um she wanted to be the first nun she wanted to be the first fully ordained bhikkhuni and the Buddha would just say don't even go there don't talk to me about it you know he just didn't want to do it and then finally um his cousin Ananda who the Buddha would call godma sometimes because they belong both belong to the godma clan Goa being like a family name that Ananda who always kind of had

a soft spot in his heart for women he
defended mapap goami and finally
persuaded the Buddha to allow bikun to
be

ordained why mainly the argument he used
is aren't women just as able to become
enlightened as men the Buddha couldn't
deny it and so he said all right I'll
ordain women but now you've done it
because now because of nuns being
ordained the Buddha sasna will last only
half as long it would have lasted a
thousand years now it's only going to
last last 500 are the true teachings the
true
dhma so according to

that Buddhism should have already died
out it should have died out literally
over a thousand years
ago so that's kind of a canundrum
one of the first chapters in my first
book essays in ter Buddhism I deal with
this it's like dealing with the various
possibilities of how it could say that
in the
texts and personally I'm gravitating
towards the idea that it's like
Apocrypha the Buddha didn't really say
that Buddhism would last for only 500
years because you can't really say that
he was wrong I mean some westerners
could but I think most devout terab
Buddhists would not even suggest the

possibility that the Buddha could be
just flat out
wrong um then again most of of them
would be reluctant even to say that it's
just Apocrypha that somehow got into the
text Maybe by monks who really didn't
like the idea of ordaining nuns that I
mean it was apparently if you look at
the text it was always somewhat
controversial there seems to have been
two factions in the early songa the pro
bikuni faction and the anti- bikuni
faction and I think the anti-un faction
may have gotten this part into the texts
but that's just a guess
but I one of the least plausible

explanations for this 500 years thing is the official Orthodox explanation that when the Buddha said 500 he really meant 5,000 like why would he say 500 if he meant

5,000

so I I mean if you really want the full the full story you're GNA have to to read the book I guess and I'll just move on to Nature cures next question here maybe the the current time is Pacha Buddha's time and that would be the logical consequence of like if the true teachings really did die out only 500 years after the time of the Buddha then we'd be in a time between buddhismspiritual next Buddha comes

along who is going to be Matea Buddha or
according to the Sanskrit

mraa and he hasn't come yet even though
a lot of people have claimed to be my
tra including elron

hubard

so um yeah it seems to me that there is
still dharm in the world so I think the
500 years um

prognosis was not not objectively true

but maybe maybe it is true maybe the

Buddha realized that I mean that really

like the the nucleus like the the heart

of it would die out and you just have

like empty forms you'd have still be

people practicing and maybe even still

people becoming enlightened but they'd be becoming enlightened largely in spite of the teachings instead of because of them kind of a deal sort of like you have fully enlightened Roman Catholics who you know they're becoming enlightened pretty much more in spite of the teachings of just of the New Testament than because of them and I do think that that may have happened sometimes like I've championed the possibility of St John of the Cross San one De La Cruz being an orun more than once on these q&as so anyway a peka Buddha is a kind of Buddha like a quasi Buddha who arises during time when there is no Buddhism no

dhama and he's just a Hermit he doesn't teach dhama he just keeps to himself you know he's he's you know approximately as enlightened as a a fully enlightened Buddha but for some reason he can't or won't teach a

dama

so that's uh I mean maybe but I kind of doubt it I don't think so so I'll just move on to Nature cures next question

here is there any chance to get

enlightened in heaven Who coming from the human realm has more chance there

well I mean there are certain very

Advanced Heaven Realms called the pure

abodes and everyone who goes to the pure

bods becomes enlightened because only
anagami you know the there it's like one
step below full

Enlightenment when I mean after they die
they don't they're not Reborn born as a
human being anymore they're not reborn
in any of the the kamaloka you know the
sensual Realms they are born in these
very Advanced Heaven Realms called the
pure abodes where they live in Bliss for
millions of years and then fade out into
Enlightenment or Nirvana par

Nana so that would be the first I mean
obviously you know all the inhabitant of
the pure abodes become enlightened
according to Orthodox Buddhist cosmology
but I do think it is possible for other

dvas in other Heaven Realms to become fully enlightened I'm pretty sure that the text would endorse that I can't remember of any cases offand but I'm pretty sure that there are Gods who are just devout practitioners of dhama you know they renounce their Golden Palaces and Celestial nymphs or they can just somehow remain detached from them and become in enlightened I mean obviously according to the text like Saka king of Gods he was an Arya he wasn't fully enlightened but he was an Arya so he was a devout Buddhist which is I mean in my opinion is just kind of religious propaganda where they're

taking the patron saint of the early
vadic you know the followers of vadm and
they're taking their their Patron deity
and changing his name and turning him
into a good Buddhist
but that's um that's a totally different
story I'm digressing
majorly so yeah there there are chances
to get in light in heaven it's just more
difficult there because everything is so
nice there that you're not really like
kicked in the butt enough to inspire you
to strive for something better that's
why in Buddhism they say that getting a
human birth is the best kind of birth if
you want to make progress in dama
because in the lower Realm

you're too Afflicted or ignorant you know just too handicapped in various ways to really strive for enlightenment and in the higher Realms everything's so nice that you just tend to be complacent and uh you don't see much point in uh really striving for something better so I'll just move on to Nature cures next and last question here are there many devas or brahmas on Buddha's side in heaven now or mostly on Mara side um I would assume that most of the inhabitants of the heaven Realms just really aren't taking sides you know they're just living their own lives they don't really care about just like

religion on this ball of
dirt so I assume I mean most of the
Davis and the brahmas just because they
had like good enough mental states to
get into heaven in the first place
they're going to be more good than bad
but Mara isn't necessarily on the side
of bad so much as he's on the side of
anything samsaric so if he can't get you
to be good or if he can't get you to be
bad and go to hell he'll get you to be
good and go to heaven because it's all
ssara anyway so in that sense um most
deities would be kind of on Mara's side
just because they're still samsaric you
know they're
still buying into something

sorrow rather than striving for enlightenment but I mean you can be on both sides at the same time I think pretty much all Buddhists are that you're on the Buddhist side and that you know you respect the Buddha and you might be striving for enlightenment or at least you know a better situation but still I mean you're going to be succumbing to The Temptations of Mara so to speak and so you know you're kind of ambivalent you're not 100% black black or white you know just we're we're all mostly Shades of Gray so you can be a little bit on Buddha side and a little bit of Mara side on the same at the same

time but

uh yeah I think Davis and

Brahma for the most part they would be

better than us just because they wound

up in a better place than us you know

their mind is in a better place so that

it caused their body to be in a better

place but at the same time they're still

samsaric and so they're still subjects

of Mara's

domain so it's it's kind of a vague

question I mean it's it's not just

either or it's not just black or white

it's not like you have to pick sides you

got to be on the Buddha side or Mara

side because uh most people are I mean

most Buddhists are on both sides to some

degree because we're still we're still
still wallowing in samsara also aren't
we so I think I'll just move on the next
question this is from Quick
quiz and quick quiz says how did your
Visa work in Burma when you were a
freelance or cave monk well bu Burma has
what are called meditation visas because
one of Burma's most valuable natural
resources is dhama and the Burmese
government you know they might have
their their shortcomings but they
realize that dhama is a National
Treasure Burma may be the most devoutly
sincerely Buddhist country on the on the
planet and so um you know there's a big

business it's sort of like dhama tourism
people are are flying from all over the
world to come and meditate in meditation
centers in rangon or in Branch
monasteries associated with monasteries
in rangon where they're going to PA doya
or some such
place so um they've got it worked out so
that you can get just a yearly
meditation Visa you might have to work
up to it maybe your first your entry
Visa would be three months and then
maybe the next one would be like six
months and then from then on it's it's
you just get it renewed once a year and
as a monk I would have supporters you
know I'd have at least one supporter in

rangon who was willing to do the
paperwork and get my visa extension so I
wouldn't I usually wouldn't even have to
come to rangon to get my Visa
renewed you might have to send them your
passport and you don't send it in the
mail because the mail is so completely
unreliable in Burma that only a fool
would send anything valuable in the mail
but you've got what's called a 1 Jan you
know you know somebody who's going to
rangon they're a devout supporter you
know they'll say yes sir very good sir
I'll take it to so and so and rangon and
and they do it and it happens so as a
general rule I didn't have to worry

about it I'd have some lay person a lay supporter in the in the big city doing the Visa stuff for me so yeah that's thank you any of you who are watching who used to do that for me thank you and so I'll just move on to Quick quiz's next question can a monk smoke a cigarette according to the sutas well there was no tobacco in India in the Buddhist time so there's no rule against smoking tobacco just as there's no rule against taking LSD because LSD hadn't been invented yet you there's no no rule against playing video games because in Ancient India they just didn't have video games and so smoking cigarettes a lot of mon smoke cigarettes

especially in Thailand

because one of the most famous monks

considered to be an arand or fully

enlightened being in Thailand is aan man

and I have been

told aan Mong ajan man was a chain

smoker so that's kind of the peculiar

situation of an arant also literally

being a drug addict which is kind of

strange I mean it's sort of

counterintuitive isn't it because

nicotine is highly addictive and he was

a chain smoker so presumably he was

physically addicted to

nicotine but I mean if there was tobacco

in the Buddhist time hypothetically

speaking it's hardly likely that the Buddha would have allowed it I'm pretty sure there would be a vinea rule against it because of course it is addictive and that causes craving and attachment you know I mean you're addicted to cigarettes you go nuts if you don't have a cigarette you're craving a cigarette so why would the Buddha who's trying to train monks to abandon all craving allow them to consume an addictive substance is going to cause them to Crave this addictive substance it's just silly for people to say well you know the Buddha would say it's okay but um I guess at uh the sixth great Council that was held in rangon in

like

1956 there was a western a western

Buddhist I think it was Christmas humph

from England who uh actually raised the

question I mean is it allowable for a

good Buddhist including Buddhist monks

to smoke tobacco and the the monks who

were presiding over this we so

conservative so unwilling to do anything

novel you know anything unusual they

just shel it they didn't want to deal

with it they didn't want to face it and

I'm sure the ties would just reject any

any judgment that smoking cigarettes is

is not right because of course a Johan

mun smok

cigarettes so it has to be okay I mean
if an arant does it it's got to be
okay but uh

personally um yeah can the question can
a monk smoke a cigarette according to
the

sutas um I mean there's no mention of
cigarettes so I mean there's no mention
of it in the sutas but it in my opinion
it goes against the spirit of dharm and
vinia so I'll just move on to Quick
quiz's next question here Can monks
smoke marijuana according to the sutas
and this is kind of interesting because
as it turns out banga or cannabis is
allowable as a medicine in the rules of
monastic discipline they didn't have

tobacco in Ancient India but they
certainly had cannabis in Ancient India
and maybe the the Indo orians the ones
who brought it to ancient
India

so maybe they maybe they just grew there
naturally but the I mean the ancient
Indo orians before they ever got to
India were already smoking the stuff so
cannabis or bhunga is allowable for
medicinal purposes and according to the
rules of monastic discipline a monk is
allowed to own a pipe for inhaling
medicinal

fumes so that would seem to indicate
that under certain circumstances monks

are allowed to smoke cannabis although
it would have to be for medicinal
purposes just doing it
recreationally would be against the
rules taking a medicine uh without a
legitimate medical need for it is it's a
minor offense it's a Duca offense and
then there are some people who would say
well it would be it would be under like
um what was it the fifth precept taking
ale and wine and other intoxicants which
cause clouded of mind or
heedlessness and so then you'd have to
say well this's marijuana or cannabis
cause clouded of mind or heedlessness
and many people would say that it does
although my experience is uh I mean some

weed I mean when I was a teenager I
smoked smoke this stuff that was
supposedly from Jamaica and I'm just
driving along I run a red light and I'm
looking behind me just thinking wow I
just ran a red light and I ran two in a
row I'm so preoccupied with running the
first one and then just like five
minutes later I just start driving up a
wrong way street so something that makes
you do that yeah or if you anything
smoked excess you know any intoxicant or
any any drug consumed excess I mean
that's not going to be good
either but uh te technically speaking
cannabis is allowed to be used medically

by monks it's mentioned right there in the text and monks are allowed to own a pipe for inhaling medicinal fumes so I mean if you read the commentaries they didn't really know what it was for they were saying in the commentaries it says you're allowed to use cannabis and you're supposed to like roll naked in it to induce sweating or something but that just seems like a wild guess to me but I mean marijuana or cannabis does have certain medicinal properties like it dries out your mucous membranes you know it's like cotton mouth so if you got a snotty head cold or something it can reduce the snot for example and I guess it it's been used for treating

glaucoma for a long
time but uh yeah that's that's a
controversial one and it depends on what
monk you're talking to but technically
speaking marijuana or cannabis is
allowed for medicinal use as is having a
pipe for consuming medicinal fumes but
it would have to be for medicinal
purposes not just for getting
high so I'll just move on to Quick
quiz's next question
here can Burmese monks go to Thai
Monastery and stay there or they
wouldn't count his Vasa and reordain
well for starters it would depend on
which Thai Monastery like the Damu sect

in Thailand notoriously considers only
Theravada monks to be real monks
so they might not let even like the
Mahayana monks of Thailand stay there
much let alone Burmese
ones so they might require them to
reordain in the Theravada tradition before they
could stay at a Theravada Monastery but the
thing is the Burmese and the Thais just
don't like each other much so Burmese
monks don't want to go to Thai
monasteries and the Thais probably
wouldn't welcome them very
wholeheartedly
that like the Burma and Thailand were
notorious Arch enemies for
centuries and I mean like it was after

the British started invading and like
annexing Southern Burma into British you
know further

India that uh the Burmese maybe just uh
to show that they weren't you know
totally weak just made this unprovoked
attack on Thailand and sacked its
capital which was Audia at the time and
Thai Buddhism never fully recovered from
that it was like all the ecclesiastical
hierarchy was centered there the like
the the monastery like Scholastic system
that like the B the Buddhist educational
system was was like centered in Auda and
that's one reason why Tha monks tend not
to be Stellar Scholars because they

never fully recovered from the whole ecclesiastical structure just getting smashed by this unprovoked attack from the Burmese and they still kind of resent that and the Burmese still referred to Thailand as Audia sometimes that's one of the the main terms it's either Tha Nan which is the more modern term but a lot of people still refer to Thailand as

Audia also the burmes are so insular or provincial you know they're they're so burmac Centric that a lot of Burmese uh lay people just think that Thai Thai people are Mahayana Buddhists they at least know that they're they're like Buddhists but they just assume they're

Mahayana that only only Burma has real
Buddhism maybe maybe Sri

Lanka so I mean technically depending on
how open-minded the time Monastery was a
Burmese monk could go and stay at a Thai
Monastery but I don't think it happens
very often and if they were if they were
open-minded enough to accept that the
Burmese monk they would accept that he
was a real Monk and they wouldn't make
him reordain you know they would accept
that you know he'd been a mon he'd been
ordained for 10 years so he was a tera
they treat him like a tera and no
problem but uh personally I I can't
really remember hearing I've heard of

Western monks who were ordained in a
Burmese tradition that went to Thailand
and got along fine they were accepted so
I guess Traditions itself are I mean
it's you know it's all the the S of the
four

quarters but there are certain like
ethnic frictions between the ties and
the burmes that make it somewhat less
likely to

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

oh and om says is if suffering is our
own K and pain is not suffering is pain
itself our own comma and then in
parenthesis it says Buddha didn't make
comma and felt pain okay

so pain is the fruition of karma you
know pain is the fruition of your your
your past Deeds or to some degree your
present Deeds whereas suffering is
you're making new Karma because that's a
volitional act the pain happening to you
is happening to you arguably passively
and in accordance with Theravada and
Orthodoxy when when you feel pain I mean
that's just a passive sensation that's
just happening to you as a result of the
fruition of Karma that you've already
committed but the suffering is like a
new desire all suffering is caused by
desire and so you are let's say you got
like a pain in your foot so that pain in

your foot

is the fruition of Kama it's Kama like
it has it's running its course and it's
it's reached the final stage and you've
got pain in your foot because of it the
suffering comes from wanting that pain
to stop and that wanting is you're
making new Karma this is a new desire of
I want that to stop I don't like that
and that's the difference between pain
and suffering I mean pain is the
fruition of of comma whereas the
suffering you're making new comma and
it's not good comma either so it is
literally in Buddhism it is literally
immoral to
suffer because there's always a choice

you can choose not to suffer it's just
that most people are governed by habit
they're not fully awake they don't even
fully realize that suffering is
volitional you know like in the west
you're just trained to believe that if
you're suffering it's because you don't
have a good enough car or a good enough
iPhone or something or I mean you just
BL blame somebody else for it but really
it is volitional you always have a
choice even though you might not be
aware of that
choice so yeah the Buddha did not make
Kama and he did feel pain because it was
the fruition of past comma in his case

according to the Orthodox explanation
but he didn't suffer because he wasn't
Desiring that pain to stop and all
suffering is caused by desire whenever
you are unhappy it is because you want
something and if you know only one thing
about Buddhism that is probably the one
thing you should know whenever you are
unhappy it is because you want something
and that wanting is a choice it's a
volition you can just choose not to want
it which goes against human nature big
time sometimes especially if you got a
toothache or
something so I guess I should just move
on next question here and this is from
rakasa and this one I think we're going

to we're going to go beyond two hours on this one we as I said we got a veritable zombie apocalypse of questions this is just a merciless Onslaught not that I'm complaining or anything I'm not wanting the questions to be

fewer so this is from rakasa and rakasa says hello poo I would like to hear your response to something an acquaintance of mine said in a recent Twitter discussion this was in regards to a western Buddhists disbelief at Himalayan devotional occult practices and the general lack of knowledge about Karma rebirth Etc among ethnic laymen my acquaintance said quote honestly I think

a goat herder who wakes up makes a few offerings at The Shrine does a few prostrations and means it when he says his Refuge prayer but never meditates in the s in the sense most westerners expect is more of a Buddhist than somebody who reads Buddhist philosophy and meditates for two hours per day but never sincerely takes Refuge these things are foundational in a way Western secular Buddhists often don't see and resist seeing

unquote so that's yeah I've I've considered this also um it's I used to consider it to be like a Sila and caribdis situation and those of you who don't know what Sila and caribdis were

it's like in The Odyssey Homer's Odyssey

um

odysea between these two monsters these

two these two dire dangers Scylla and

caribdis caribdis was some kind of

monster that would eat the sailors if

the ship got too close and caribdis was

like a it was like a whirl pool that

would turn into like a water fountain it

would just wreck the

ship and I used to consider was like

like traditional Asian Buddhism was like

one of these monsters let's say like

caribdis you know with his just

unquestioning devotion you know there's

almost no open-mindedness no you're not

allowed to deviate I mean it's just
Dogma you know you just believe it
because that's what you're told that's
what your mama and daddy told you that's
what the monks say it's true you know
it's sort of a medieval approach whereas
the caribdis or the the no Sila was the
whirlpool the caribdis of Western
Buddhism is this multi-headed you know
it's just moral relativism and it's all
eclectic and everything is optional you
know like even like renunciation or or
keeping CA you know just it's all
optional belief in Liberation from
suffering you know and I mean both kind
I mean a lot of devout Burmese Buddhists
I mean they're they're devout Buddhists

but they couldn't tell you what the four noble truths are you know it's just I mean a lot of them do they're probably the average Burmese Buddhist is probably more knowledgeable than the average Western Buddhist because a lot of Western Buddhists who call themselves Buddhist couldn't tell you what the noble truths are either so I think

uh yeah I think like the average Burmese villager is much more Buddhist than the average Westerner who attends Spirit Rock or IMS for example I mean there are a lot of good Buddhists in the west who are much more

serious because they're having to Buck
their tradition you know they're having
to go against you know the tradition
that they've been living in since birth
excuse

me and so Western Buddhists especially
Western monastics they tend to be much
more serious and really more intent on
cultivating

wisdom and getting out of

samsara than Asian monks but still

Western Buddhists in general tend to be
very lukewarm very just pick like
cherry-picking what they like and just
dismissing or ignoring the rest

so I mean it would depend on the

Buddhist it would depend on which Asian

Buddhist you're referring to which
Western Buddhist you're referring
to
um so I mean it could be argued either
way but in general I think the Asian
Buddhists who have just been living in
Buddhist culture for thousands of years
um yeah I mean Buddhism is just it just
permeates the tradition it permeates the
culture so they're going to partake of
of Buddhist ideas and Buddhist attitudes
more than a Westerner who claims to be a
Buddhist but just rejects or disbelieves
or ignores most of what is considered
what is considered to be basic
Buddhism

so yeah I do think that uh I mean you
have to have a

certain like deep belief in order to
really make progress that too much
eclecticism too much

open-mindedness too much it just leads
to

lukewarmness and you just don't have the
drive to really practice as hard as you
can you need that a certain amount of
Willey fanaticism at least a little hint
of it in order to really make progress
and the

Asians on average have more of that than
Western Buddhists do it seems to me

so I guess I sort of answered that
question I guess I hope and so I'm just

going to move on to the next question
and this is from
denesh and denesh says hello poo I enjoy
these Q&A sessions you lived in Burma as
a true Seeker for 30 years you have a
lot of knowledge and experiences that
can benefit other Seekers but I was
wondering why do you waste valuable
airtime answering questions about
tattoos and similar questions which have
zero value when it comes to spirituality
philosophy or dhama if possible answer
only the profound questions related to
dhama that would enhance the quality of
these sessions significantly and some
listeners like me won't feel that their

time is not wasted happy facee sorry
about the negative comment unhappy
phase well I mean I did answer the
French toast question this time didn't I
um most questions are about dhama and
really I don't want to start picking and
choosing what questions I answer I mean
if a question is just totally
inappropriate then or it's just sort of
somebody just sarcastically asks a
rhetorical question just with disrespect
or something that I wouldn't answer that
but uh yeah I'm not going to pick and
choose what what questions I'll answer
as a general rule I mean I do have the
ultimate the ultimate prerogative to to
not even

mention a question that was asked if I don't consider it to be appropriate but uh I do think that answering like an easy or even humorous question sometimes you know it kind of lightens it up a little bit uhu makes it a little more entertaining so that people enjoy the Q&A a little more um there are people who are just really hard-nosed they just want pure DH you know they they don't want to read a novel because they only only want to read sutras you know all I've met monks like this like Western monks that I mean they don't even want to read comparative religion they don't

want to read Western philosophy they
just all they want to read is sutas and
they think that's all anybody should
read but most people don't swing that
way I did I mean I was reading Doki
sometimes reading all sorts of things
when I was a monk and it is good idea I
mean even the Buddha said that you
should be bahuta having heard much just
so that you'll know other points of view
but I mean you you can say well tattoos
and french toast really don't have
anything to do with
dama

but I don't know people ask the question
and uh I'm here to answer questions and
if I'm able to answer the question it's

all fair game and uh I'm sorry if you don't like the tattoo and french toast questions and they do form a small minority of the questions that I am asked

so yeah I'm not sure exactly what to say about this but I'm just going to for the most part continue answering whatever questions are asked of me in good faith I mean there are a couple of wise Acres that'll ask joke question sometimes maybe even the French toast question was a kind of a joke question but uh it's all done in uh it's all done in uh what am I what am I trying to say here not good faith so much is Just uh just a

sense of uh

Goodwill let's go with

that so I'll just go on to the next

question this is we're almost at the end

here by golly by

Jo this is from EU Diva and EU Diva says

hi David what's your thoughts on Sri

Lankan waharaka movement they are

claiming that all the toptica

translations are wrong and they have the

most current translation well I don't

know hardly anything about the Sri

Lankan waharaka movement I'm not exactly

sure what it is I assume there's more to

it than just translating the titica but

I would be very wary of anybody claiming

that all the titica translations are

wrong except theirs you know it's like
the stereotypical fool in the suas it's
like only this is true everything else
is

wrong so yeah I'm sure that all the
other Buddhist Scholars and Paul
Scholars that are out there studying the
titica and translating it I I assume
that um only the waharaka ones know what
they're talking about and I'm not
exactly sure how the Sri Lankan waharaka
movement deviates I mean they might have
certain terms that they translate
differently and it may be that there's
just a different facet or Nuance of a
poly word I mean you don't you don't

have a direct exact word for word

translation from poly in English that's

any translator can I mean that's obvious

to

them that I mean you don't like a word

in poly like dhama doesn't have like an

exact translation into English or or Dua

I mean those two words are used an awful

lot in the sutas but there's no exact

equivalent in the English language for

either of those words and it may be that

they're just going with a different

approximation and claiming that their

approximation is the right approximation

and yeah I would just be wary of anybody

claiming that you know only their point

of view is the correct one and everybody

else is wrong that that is just the stereotypical fool in the poly texts not that I'm declaring all Sri Lankan waharaka Buddhist monks or Buddhists to be fools but yeah I would be wary of any such

claims and so I just move on to the next question which is the very last question of this veritable onslaught of questions and this question also from EU Diva says I assume you don't want to agree with biku bod and biku suato translations can you please give us more info on that because I'm not expert in sutas or poly I only read their translated sutas if they are making

errors in translations who am I supposed
to read now I'm a bit frustrated I have
to get enlightened but books are
wrong well books can be
wrong um yeah I'm I don't agree with
biku bodis and biku su's politics both
of them are just far leftists you know
it's like people will call me a far
right extremist they've called me that
before and like Buddhist like uh
Buddhism journals and so forth I've been
mentioned you know as like Nazi adjacent
farri extremist and so forth but you
know I take these political Compass
tests I'm almost exactly in the middle
but these like biku bod and biku suato I
mean they're definitely far leftists

bkub bodyi I mean technically it may be
that he could even not even be a monk
anymore I mean he's he's flirting with
paraj because he has been spoken in
favor of women's reproductive rights
which for the most part means abortion
and abortion from the point of view of
terraa Buddhism and the rules of
monastic discipline is literally murder
so for him to Champion women's
Reproductive Rights I mean if any if
even one Buddhist
woman or like even a Buddhist any
Buddhist they they hear buub saying you
know he's in FA favor of women's
Reproductive Rights and they think oh so

it's okay for us to get an abortion
because babot says so he's a Buddhist
Authority we can trust him they go out
and pay for an abortion the woman gets
an abortion the man just helps her get
an abortion then I mean bot is
excommunicated if he has done that
because he has been he has persuaded
somebody to commit murder and any monk
who persuades somebody to commit murder
do they cause they commit murder because
this person you know said it's okay or
whatever then he's not a monk anymore
but whether that is actually happen I
don't know but setting aside their
politics that um I've never read biku
su's translations I mean I've been told

I think he's the he's the one who's like the moderator or the the chief moderator on P sudo Central that he will actually delete any mention of me on his on his forums so yeah he's he's definitely I mean he he's got like the rainbow flag he's the rainbow monk or something but um let's see here biku I mean I have to admit I don't agree with his politics and he doesn't really practice much for what I've been told that he doesn't meditate much if at all that he breaks win rules doesn't care about following win strictly he's Main a scholar and Scholar monks tend to be this way like Burmese scholar monks are just notorious

for being lack

monks but bbot is one of the best

translators of paully in English that

his translations are good translations

so you can trust his translations I mean

I I wouldn't like try to read all of his

footnotes or

endnotes but uh I like his editorial

stuff I mean it can be depressing you

read that stuff but um his his

translations are solid there there are

better translations than you'll get from

like the Polytech

Society so yeah bot is a good

translator aan tanero I mean he's

self-indulgent to some degree which is

not good for a translator I mean a good

translator should be as invisible as possible that if you're reading a translation it should be as much as possible as though you're reading in the original language it should have the same effect on you but Aaron Tanro in his older translations anyway I haven't read any of his more recent translations I mean he might as well just every few lines just say Here I Am look at me a John Tanro translating this because he's so idiosyncratic and self-indulgent in his translation style that he's not invisible at all so you get Aaron Tano's personality kind of splattered all over the page but

nevertheless he is intelligent and with regard to practice-based knowledge he has more of it than bkub because he actually

practices uh aan I mean nle like the the one who died back in like 19 was it 60 you know who translated the the wiui Maga and a number of other difficult to translate texts um not not the the new famous nle but the old famous nle he's he was a good translator he was an excellent translator he was a little bit idiosyncratic too

however

so yeah I mean vkubon since since the question here is mainly about biku and biku suato or at least it starts with

them I mean I really I'm I'm haven't
read biku sujata's translations I don't
know how good or bad they are vbot on
the other hand despite you know anything
else bbot is a good solid translator of
poly into

English

so um I mean if you read German like uh
what was it

uh was it Nana

Loa and uh who was the other one yanaoka
and his uh he had a disciple both of
them were German they translated well
into German and now I can't think of who
it is Yan til Loa and

Yona fortunately I had the their their

Buddhist dictionary here so I mean they
they would be good translators into
German and uh since this person is EU
Diva I mean if you're living in the EU
you might speak fluent German so it
could be that you might be better off
just reading German
translations so the whole moral of that
story is that bkub bodyi despite his
politics and so forth is a solid a good
knowledgeable very intelligent very
skilled translator of poly into English
and he uses the standard accepted terms
you know he follows precedent with
regard to like translating SI as
mindfulness whereas aan tanero at least
in the past translated uh mindfulness is

like frames of reference or something so
that if you didn't know that he was
talking about STI I mean you just be
confused so personally I prefer biku's
translations to aan tanos although
that's a matter of
taste and there are lots of translators
now like Maurice Walsh's translation of
the dean Naya is is an acceptable
translation I think it's a good
translation
um yeah so I mean most of the like
the uh like the the most
how do I say this I'm still having
problems with language
today um like the main translation the

most well-known translation of each polytext is generally one of the better ones so I would go with that as a kind of a Criterion for for choosing which because I mean there are lots of bad translations but they tend not to be uh very high-profile most most people have never heard of the bad translations the the good translations are the ones that are trusted by you know monks and lay people you know everywhere and so they tend to be better known you know they'll be higher up on the on the lists of uh like on Amazon or something and so um uh yeah I just go with that and that's it I'm done answering questions and I'm getting a little bit

hoarse not that I'm becoming a zombie or anything but I am getting horse I'm not exactly hissing yet so there is that and if you have any questions that's why I'm here I answer questions to the best of my ability so just leave them in the comments below if you have access to the Discord server you can ask them there if you have access to the Subscribe Star channel you can ask them there and give this uh video a like if you liked it and subscribe if you haven't subscribed already and uh look at the URL links below including my books and be happy

hello and welcome to episode 69 of
question and answer I am your host poo
basa and this is my beverage and for
those of you who do not have video you
just listen to these without looking at
the video this is sweet
tea and it's fairly
good good sweet tea which and sweet tea
is just drunk prodigiously in the
South so anyway we have got a merciless
onslaught of questions again
today and uh I'll just uh avoid making
any risque innuendos about this being
episode 69 although I guess I just kind
of did because we have got like this is
apocalyptic just the amount of questions

we got is we got a shipload of questions here and so I should just Wade right into them and the first question is from Shiprock um wait from sharp Rock see I just said shipload and then and then his name name comes out as Ship Rock but it's really sharp Rock and I hope I did not demean his dignity in any way by saying his name wrong I kind of doubt that sharp rock is really his name anyhow but you never know it could be and I might have just demeaned his dignity a second time leaving him emotionally bruised or something so I just get into answering the questions stop making these commentaries that demean people's dignity even in a

potential manner so sharp Rock Says

I recently discovered that there are two different forms of the eight precepts upos Sila being the most familiar form and

Aila being another form that seems to place more emphasis on right speech I have attached some texts from a wiui Maga study guide and he he sent a couple or he uploaded a couple of pictures of uh pages from a book describing the a tamak or Sila not

Su so anyway he continues here when and why should one adopt upos Sila versus aaka I find the latter appealing because right speech is a weak area for

me

well I must say that I may have come across AA tamaka Sila before like in a book but it is just not a thing at all in burmes terab Buddhism and so it's just not a thing there and so I've never really encountered it like in a practical manner any anything more than just hearing about it um there is nine precepts that are taken in Burma uh sometimes I've had lay people come to me when I was in Burma asking me to give them nine precepts which is pretty much eight precepts with um like a ninth precept of just having meta for all beings and there's also a j prian deam kind of Sila where you're vowing to take

it for

life and my teacher and the Abbot of the
first Monastery I stayed at in Burma he
would give the Jita

prian um refuges and precepts pretty

frequently and the burmes can just take
it without doubt without hesitation

whereas Western people they're they're
going to be thinking do I really want to
take this for the rest of my life you
know I'm not really going to vow to do
this for the rest of my life so we're
we're more we think too much it makes us
more lukewarm I guess plus we just have
less Faith because we've got
more uh

more more Reliance on sort of uh
independent thought or something than
people in a traditional
culture so
anyway the AA tamaka
Sila it's it's kind of a
strange eight precepts because it just
does away with a lot of the precepts of
the osila in order to
include um not only right livelihood as
the eighth precept but it
divides um wrong speech into four
categories I'm pretty sure or at least
three I forgot to uh investigate this
but um traditionally wrong speech like
if you're taking five precepts even you
know you undertake the precept to

abstain from wrong speech and
traditionally there are four kinds of
wrong speech there's just flat out lying
there's like badmouthing people behind
their back like malicious gossip or just
saying things to get other people to
dislike somebody else then you've got
perus SAA which is Harsh speech like you
know cussing somebody out to their face
is just deliberately trying to shame
them or hurt their feelings or trouble
them in some way and then there's s
papal laa which is just sort of
pointless babbling it's just uh
just small talk I mean usually it's
translated as gossip but it's can just

be any kind of you know telling dirty jokes or something maybe I don't know it's just any kind of speech that is just kind of a waste of time that you know nobody is benefited from it and so I mean they've gotten rid of the intoxicic intoxicants and so forth for this this new kind of or this other kind of eight precepts and it must have been just sort of like an alternative that really never caught traction and um probably most terraa Buddhists have never heard of it

so let's see when and why should one adopt upos cover versus AA

Tamila well I think you're probably

better off just taking the the standard
eight precepts um the aiva Tamila really
it just boils down to five precepts with
um the right livelihood replacing the
intoxicants I mean that's really what it
boils down to because dividing up wrong
speech into different categories is
redundant because wrong speech Just
includes the the kinds of wrong speech
that are enumerated in this other eight
precepts so it's really just five
precepts with the last precept swapped
out for a different
one so I mean the only reason I I could
think of why somebody would take the AA
tamak

casila um instead of like the standard
five precepts would be if you just want
to have a beer every now and then and
you place more emphasis on right
livelihood which means you wouldn't be
able to sell beer you'd be able to drink
it but you wouldn't be able to sell
it so I'll just move on to the next
question I

guess and this is from

oh and oh

says uh with regard to a YouTube video
of a monk eating his meal and uh he
asked me this a few weeks ago I think
and um I think he asked it in an unusual
place or the
the the question was just disappeared

off of the YouTube comments or something
and so um I'm going to have to answer it
late but um he sent me this video of a a
monk who is living in Sri Lanka I think
he was a western monk living in Sri
Lanka doing this video and he was he had
just gotten back from alms round he had
a lot of food I mean it was like a bowl
full of

food and so um om here is asking is it
common for a monk in Asia to have this
many food every day and how can they eat
that

much um and and then he says in
parenthesis that monk said he was a one
meal eater so he ate only one meal a day

and I I watched the video and he really didn't get all that much compared to how much I used to get um I mean there were times there was this one Village Shier Village on the indin River and I didn't go to it every day but I had a lot of like people who wanted to offer food to me and they were like crowd they were like flooding into this other Village that I would go for MMS to and I mean it was just like a circus I mean there was so many people there that finally I just okay you know like once a week or once every two weeks or something I think it was every e8th day upos day so it was like every two weeks I would walk to Village and there was so many people

wanting to offer food there that I mean
it was just lined up it was like almost
every household in the village I mean it
was like over a hundred people well over
100 maybe 200 people all wanting to put
food into my bowl so I'd have to have
these guys coming with like baskets and
bags and stuff so that when my bowl
would fill up I just have to dump it
into this basket or something and just
keep going and so I'd get enough food
for I mean it would like a 10day supply
of food at least

I mean it was enough food to feed an
entire

Monastery

and you can criticize that because I I obviously didn't need anything near that much food but it's like you're doing it because these people want to offer food they want to earn Merit by offering your food so I mean I'd accept the food and then the whole Monastery would have a feast you know because it would get distributed and uh yeah everybody everybody was well fed that day but uh I mean even just going for an ordinary alms round like the very first video on my channel if I remember correctly is me going for alms round with this long line of people they all want to put food in it's like going house by house if you're like more or less famous I mean it

doesn't really work you know it's like
in the text it's telling telling monks
you know they should go house by house
through the village until they get
enough food and then they come back but
I started off doing that but so many
people wanted to offer food to the
Exotic foreign monk who was
me who lives alone in a cave in the
forest so that made me even more
exotic I just get to the outskirts of
the village and there just be this long
line of people and so I would try to you
know give everybody the opportunity to
put at least a little bit of food in you
know some places I just it just be this

rule just one spoon each I mean it had to be that way and then the bowl would still be just completely stuffed so I mean when I was a young monk um I could I mean my Bowl's pretty big that holds over a gallon and I could eat at least 2third to three fourths of that and still be skinny like when I was 30 years old but uh I think it's mostly just because it was mostly just rice so there wasn't a lot of nutritional value in it but uh yeah it is common I mean famous monks especially famous seatt like they don't even have to go for Ms they just stay at the

monastery and just crowds of people come all wanting to offer food and so they'll have this table just completely covered with various dishes of food and it's just Overkill I've tried to tell Burmese Buddhists you know you're better off feeding a hungry little kid or even a hungry dog than putting an extra bowl of food on a table in front of a monk who's already fat and has already got like 50 pounds of food sitting in front of them but they just don't see it that way they think you get more Merit by offering to a monk than you get by offering to a hungry Village kid or a scy

dog so yeah it is common for a monk in Asia to have that many food every day and they don't eat that much you know they just eat as much as they want to eat and I mean there's no way you could eat you know literally 50 pounds of food or even five pounds probably so yeah especially if a monk is famous or just he's considered to be you know above the the average in in his monastic practice or so forth and people are just drooling at the opportunity to earn Merit by offering food to this exotic holy man so yeah that I got more food than that monk in the video did by far sometimes so I guess I'll just move on

to oh next question which is there is always a possibility that the Buddha was right about the pure dharm lasting 500 years what if one of early Buddhist schools not terra had pure dharm and it this school was gone around 500 years after Buddha said those words maybe it was the one with only the sutas without Abid dama so the school with only the sutas without Abid dama would be the santica school and I don't know when it died out but I assume it died out long after 500 years um after the Buddhist time

so um I mean it is theoretically possible that I mean the Buddha

notoriously

predicted that the true teachings the

sadama would last only 500 years and

that was not 500 years from now but 500

years from then which was like 2,500

years ago so true DH should not exist if

that text is

true and so you got people wrangling

with it it really is wrangle worthy of

an

issue um but I mean om here is saying

you know what if one of the early

Buddhist schools that wasn't terab was

the the true teachings and then it died

out after 500 years and I just don't

think that's very likely because all of

the schools had a different emphasis and

they all kind of branched out and even within the first hundred years pretty much all of the schools of Buddhism were already adopting developments in dhama that weren't taught by the Buddha in all likelihood sort of like Christianity you know relatively early on there's all these teachings that are added to just fundamental Christian dogma that Jesus never taught probably in my opinion Jesus never taught that he was the only begotten Son of God for example but and that got included and Buddhism is sort of like that too I mean there like the four stages of sainthood there's a there's a few things that I've

mentioned repeatedly in these q's and
A's um that I mean they just became
fundamental Dharma or Dharma in Buddhism
like the 12 nidana theory of picha Samu
you know it's just standard for all
schools of Buddhism as far as I know and
uh I just don't think that it originated
with the Buddha himself dependent core
Rising did but the 12 nidana Theory you
know this causes this causes this in a
in a linear sequence I don't think so so
I mean all of the schools were were
victims of that I
guess and so I really don't think that
there was any of were any of the um pre
Mahayana schools that were
established um you know 500 four or 500

years after the time of the Buddha you
know just you know that existed 400
years after the time of the Buddha say I
don't think there was any school of
Buddhism that was just absolute pristine
pure teachings of the Buddha you know
there's always going to be this stuff
that gets mixed
in

so yeah I think you'd have to go with a
different Theory as to why in the text
the Buddhist says that the sadama you
know the the the true dhama is only
going to exist for 500 years and still I
would my preferred theory is probably
that it's just apocryphal and the Buddha

really never said it that would be my
guess although it's just a
guess so I'll just move on to the next
question which is from bodh sat
969 and this is another question that
got asked some time ago and I just never
saw the question question he he asked on
Twitter or X and I don't even look at my
Twitter feed as a general rule my
sweetheart manages my Twitter so she's
the one that uploads stuff on the
Twitter and uh every once in a while
she'll show me something you know
somebody trying to contact me or
something um but for the most part I
don't even I don't look at Twitter so
anyway buyat 969 says I posted a

question on X longer ago but you didn't see it here it is I wrote with an Indian Buddhist on acts who explained to me that Hindus do not recognize Buddhism as an independent religion in their eyes it is just a form of Hinduism and some claim that the Buddha is just an avatar of Vishnu he said they want to destroy Buddhism through assimilation they control Buddhist temples while Christians control churches and Muslims control mosques your opinion on that did Hinduism lead to the decline of Buddhism as much as Islam

um yeah it is true that many Hindus

consider Buddhism to just be a branch of
Hinduism

and I mean it's it's not really true
because Buddhism does not consider the
vdas to be authoritative and so since
Buddhism is nonic it could hardly be
considered a branch of
Hinduism like Sonia was
nonic and so that was not considered a
branch of Hinduism until one branch of
Sania started accepting the vdas as
authoritative and then it became known
as

yoga and but it is true that uh in Hindu
tradition the Buddha is considered to be
an avatar of Vishnu which was like if
you can't beat them join them in a way

it was like um for centuries centuries
and centuries Buddhism and Hinduism or
Proto Hinduism were like Rivals you know
they were competitors for the faith of
the people throughout

India and they they borrowed from each
other a lot and finally I guess the
Hindus there were times when buddhis
Buddhism was in the ascendant that most
of the Indian population were
Buddhist if they were religious at all
and

uh so the Hindus just said well the
Buddha was an avatar of Vishnu which
would kind of make
Buddhism like a kind of Hinduism but he

was like the deceiver he was like trying
to lead people away from the true
teachings of Hinduism by like sort of
culling the herd by turning the the
goats into Buddhists and keeping the
Sheep Hindu or some such and I mean
that's it's all just religious
propaganda there's so much religious
propaganda if you look for it um whether
Hindus really want to destroy Buddhism
through assimilation I mean some of them
probably do you know like some Hindu
politicians may may be quite okay with
just calling Buddhism a branch of
Hinduism and then just sort of like
sidelining it marginalizing
it

um let's see so my opinion on that is
yeah I mean it's Buddhism and Hinduism
have been rivals in India for a long
time and finally the Hindus won and I
think one of the main reasons there are
a few main reasons why the Hindus won it
was like it was the the Muslim invasion
of India that pretty much wiped out
Buddhism and that was for a couple of
reasons it didn't wipe out Hinduism but
it did wipe out Buddhism and one reason
why it wiped out Buddhism is the
Buddhists were just uncompromising in
their pacifism as a general rule and
just Buddhist philosophy just does not
condone fighting not even like in

self-defense really unless I mean if
you're like a really advanced Saint then
you're not even going to fight to defend
yourself so there is that and but on the
other hand the Hindus or the Proto
Hindus they had like Marshal Role Models
you know like the Mahabharata it takes
you know the whole Mahabharata takes
place on a battlefield right before a
battle where Vishnu himself is
explaining to Arjuna that not only is it
okay to fight in a battle it is your
sacred duty to kill your own Rel
atives in a battle if that is if that
is you know if you're a soldier and
they're on the other
side then it's just your sacred Duty or

like the the ramayana is another is very
it's like about a war you know the mahab
barata is about a
war

so

the the uh the vdic Proto Hindus and
later the Hindus they did have like a
warlike tradition that they could draw
from that could
justify fighting against the invading
Muslims but also another reason why the
Buddhists died out in India is they were
becoming very very Monastery oriented
and like monastic University oriented so
the Muslims would just come in and just
wipe out the universities like Nanda and

it would just sort of collapse the whole ecclesiastical

system but uh so the question here at the end did Hinduism lead to the decline of Buddhism as much as Islam I don't think so

um like they didn't the Hindus really didn't cause the decline of of Buddhism unless like some tantric elements from from Hinduism got into Buddhism and sort of made it kind of degenerate in certain ways but um in a way the the Rivalry between Buddhism and Hinduism strengthen both sides it's like capitalism you have a a monopoly like a monoculture then I mean it can just go downhill and you're stuck with it but

when you've got two like different systems two or more different systems that are competing with each other they're going to keep trying to up their game try to be as you know the monks are going to try and be more saintly and the the philosophers are going to try to be more you know just more subtle and profound just as a way of defeating the other side or getting more converts or whatever so I do think that one reason why India went through this golden age is because of all this competition of different spiritual and philosophical systems just competing with each other um so yeah I think the the Muslims

and also just sort of societal decline to a certain degree especially in in like esoteric Buddhism it started becoming very weird and far out and the common person couldn't really relate to it or understand it and so I think those were two of the main reasons not the only reasons why Buddhism got wiped out but Hinduism survived and I mean the Hindus a lot of Hindus even consider Christianity to be a kind of Hinduism now some Hindu some Hindus just think all religion is is some kind of Hinduism but um this aspect that's included in this question of the h H wanting to just kind of wipe out

Buddhism or just marginalize it
trivialize it um yeah some of that does
happen but I don't think it was nearly
as much of a factor in the decline of
Buddhism in India as as the Muslim
Invasion during the Middle
Ages so we'll just move on to the next
question here this is from pranav and
pronav says what happens after the
fourth Jna in Noble eight-fold Path well
fourth jna is like the culmination of
the Noble eight-fold Path in a sense
it's right concentration is the the
eighth step in the noble Eightfold Path
and fourth Janna traditionally is the
highest Janna so that would be like the

the Perfection and
culmination and you
should um I mean if you've perfected
everything you know the whole Noble
Eightfold Path then I mean you're at
least going to become an anagami at
seems yeah I mean you're going to I mean
there's no guarantee of full
Enlightenment but you're definitely
going to get some very high attainment
if if you've uh mastered
everything but there is I mean the
ancient Indians they were just really
keen on elaborating and elaborating and
elaborating and making everything more
complicated and just one uping the
absolute abute you know some somebody

says this is the absolute and then this other group will say oh we got a higher it's higher than that what you're calling the absolute and then someone else would come along and say oh we got an even higher one and the Hindus were that way um and the Buddhists were that way to some degree so there are supposedly meditative States higher than fourth jna like uh the signless concentration of mind and so forth or just need sopit which is a kind of suspended animation but it's pretty clear from the early text that fourth Jan was as high as it got so I mean what happens after the

fourth jna is just more fourth
jna until you just you become
enlightened so I guess I should just
move on to the next question here this
is from Don FES or Don Fades depending
on what country he comes from I
don't

know but Don or Don says further to your
answer about where you would choose to
be reborn why would you not at least
choose a Heavenly

realm well this was a response to a
question that was asked last time it's
like if I could choose my next rebirth
what would I choose and I was just
saying really I mean the only wise
choice is to just choose wherever your

karma lands you because that's what you need I mean if you want to work out your karma and make you know advance in dhama and so forth I mean I don't think there's any way of cheating or getting shortcuts or anything so you're just gonna have to just land in the realm that is the consequence of your of your actions so why would I not at least choose a Heavenly realm I mean if I wind up in a Heavenly realm that's fine you know I'm not going to fight it or anything but uh really really I mean the best place you can wind up you know the best parents you can get in your next

life the best everything you can get in
your next life is just wherever your
karma lands you because your karma is
just naturally working itself out it's
like water seeking its own level you
know it's like that's what you need
that's why you get
it so yeah that's why I wouldn't choose
a Heavenly realm I mean if if I could
you know all else being equal if I could
be in heaven or lower down you know i'
go for heaven might as well but uh if it
wasn't um to my best advantage in my
Spiritual Development so to speak then
yeah I just wherever my karma lands me
that's that's where I need to
be so anyway his next question here is

and how far down the road of dispassion
do you think you are well I'm farther
along the road than most people I
suppose although there still are things
that uh that bug me like just being
frustrated at work sometimes you know
like the machine is malfunctioning or
there's a hydraulic leak that just I
don't know well I guess the hydraulic
leak isn't that big of a deal but I mean
sometimes you just get frustrated trying
to make something and it's just not
working or just
driving I mean there's so many idiotic
drivers on the road at least in South
Carolina it may be like a universal

phenomenon but uh yeah sometimes on the road you you just get frustrated like you know there's certain traffic lights that stay green for just a few seconds you know it's like the the second or third car under the the green light and it's already turning yellow and you got somebody in front of you who's like texting you know they just sit there for 5 seconds the lights turning yellow before they even move then yeah I can I can get uh bugged by that and also anybody who has a a female love interest that you know that women just it's like they've evolved this talent for just you know poking buttons on on guys so yeah my sweetheart can uh get me worked up

sometimes too she really sits her a
little hard on

it but uh yeah in some ways think I
would be considered abnormally
dispassionate disregard to certain
things but I don't want to see here I'm
talking about myself because I'm just
too damn

modest so I'm just going to move on to
the next question here which is from
Indian

guy an Indian guy says what are you
going to do when you become too famous
to us budha nerds that you can't put
every question and answer in your video
anymore you'll have to have 6h hour long

videos

LOL um yeah I think I first Stars I would just gradually reduce the number of questions each person can ask right now it's six five plus a bonus question and it might you know go down to like four or three or something if if I get lots and lots and lots of questions then I may have to start um just reducing the number of available questions per person per episode or also I could just start maybe picking and choosing the juiciest questions

um just among if if one person you know if they only ask one question then i' answer that but if somebody asks like five questions and there's like you know

60 Questions that have to be answered
then I might just take the liberty of of
sort of editing and picking the ones
that I think would be of greatest
interest and greatest benefit to you my
viewers so I'll just uh move on to the
next question which is from Indiana DH
and I think Indiana dhama might be the
same as Indian guy my my synonyms are
kind of hazy so it's hard to keep up
with some people pyms because they keep
changing them but um I think Indian guy
and Indiana dhama are the same maybe I
hope I didn't demean somebody's
dignity by by uh jumping to this
assumption but I I think it's

true so anyways Indiana dhama possibly
Alias Indian guy says what are the
karmic consequences of this no wait no
Indian Adama maybe is an Indian guy gosh
it's it starts with Indian though so
let's just assume that they're similar
in certain

ways so Indiana D says what are the
karmic consequences of deciding to end
life support or resuscitation for a
person no longer able to make those
decisions for example say that John
Doe's parent is experiencing cardiac
arrest and has no do not resuscitate
order in place would John Doe be guilty
of killing his parent if he told the
Physicians not to attempt resuscitation

going to a hell realm at his own death
if his intention matters
imagine two different
scenarios one where loved the parent and
wanted to respect their previously
stated wishes and one where he feared
his abusive parent and this fear or hate
was his motivation similar hypotheticals
could be made about spouses abusive
loving Etc siblings and many other
examples and of course more specifics
could be added to the hypothetical as is
likely in any real world situation but
hopefully the above is enough for an
answer the ethics and karmic
consequences of making these kind of end

of life decisions have been of interest to me for some time now okay well I think there will probably be a distinction here between let's see get a scroll up towards the top here uh ending life support or resuscitation because um I mean let's say you've got a parent on life support God forbid and so I mean technically pulling the plug on the life support machine or giving the doctor permission to pull the plug you know he says do I have your permission you say go for it or yeah I don't mind or whatever that would be more serious than just not having somebody resuscitated because

resuscitated means they're already kind of dead and so I mean you resuscitate someone it's like you're sort of returning them to life in a way um you know they're already flatlining so technically they're already dead

maybe I mean it's hard to say what the Buddhist um you know somebody's flatlining they've had cardiac arrest you know their heart is no longer beating I mean how long are they still alive it be you know so long as there is consciousness so long as you know the the karmic stream is still going on in

in the chamber of the heart I guess
according to Orthodox terava Buddhism so
then uh I mean how would you know
exactly when they are exactly
dead but it does say that there one of
the things that you can do that will
just guarantee going to hell after you
die is killing one of your own parents
so you have to be real careful about
that and I would be very careful I'd be
very reluctant to just tell the doctor
you know go ahead and euthanize them or
go ahead and pull the plug because you
know I would prefer that I mean if it
was going to happen even if it had to
happen even it was just they were brain
dead you know their heart was still

beating they were still breathing with the assistance of this machine but I mean they're just you know they're not going to get better they're not going to wake up then I mean I guess it makes sense that the plug get pulled but still I wouldn't want to be the person calling the shots on that call but if you got power of attorney or something where you have to make the shot I don't I don't know I think uh probably the Buddhist thing to do would just be uh go bankrupt paying for the machine you know sort of it just reminds me of the old movie roller ball where uh MoonPie

is a vegetable and his his buddy who's got power of attorney over him his next of kin supposedly just because he was his best friend just told the I mean the doctor saying please sign please sign we're gonna pull the plug on him and and Jonathan e just says you know even a flower feels the sun you know just let him be the way he is so yeah that might be a better Buddhist approach even though you might go bankrupt paying the bills for

it so but yeah it is true that your intention matters and with regard to something like that I mean it could be that the Buddhist tradition saying that you're just guaranteed of hell if you if

you kill one of your parents um I mean
it's

gonna it's going to be mitigated by
certain factors you know just I mean
they're already just total you know
their body if it were a car would just
be just completely total you know
there's no way they're going to get
better they're not even going to wake
up then

yeah um you could say that the karmic
stream is already gone and even though
their body's alive that they as a person
are already dead so there's all these
all these complications I mean it's it's
a very straightforward and simple in the

text you know you kill one of your
parents you go to hell it's
guaranteed but but like your own your
own motives your own incentives and
please excuse me because my nose is very
itchy for some
reason so yeah I I'm I'm skeptical that
you're just under any circumstance that
you're G to go to hell for causing like
knowingly causing the death of one of
your
parents

so yeah I think you just have to search
within your own heart and come up with
you know what your conscience you know
when when you're most you have the most
Clarity what your conscience what you're

like what the Quakers would call your inner voice tell you to do in such a circumstance but still when it comes to pulling the plug on mom or dad I would be very

hesitant uh with regard to actually causing their death unless I mean they were just like totally brain dead and there was just nobody there they weren't going to wake up you know the the the spirit has already fled so to speak then maybe but still I'd be

hesitant just because of what the texts say for the most

part so I guess I should just move on to uh Indiana dh's next question here

because as I say we've got a veritable
Apocalypse of questions this
today and so he asked a kind of
interesting question here what does
ordination do in terraa before becoming
Buddhist I was a Roman Catholic and
ordination in that religion is believed
to cause an ontological change in the
soul of the man being ordained even a
priest who goes to hell would still be a
priest all that of course makes no sense
from the perspective of terraa other
than taking on all the rules regarding
monastic life what does ordination do or
mean for a terot and monk
well actually in
Burma and possibly in Thailand also for

all I know if you are a monk you're not considered to be human anymore you're like a super human being like the pronouns I mean you don't say you anymore you say a shimpa which means like venerable Lord you know your own parents will be down on the ground bowing to you and just like verbs and everything like like a a normal person eats it's like you know or no tamin but a monk

he's you know it's just like sleeping different words walking going coming it's they use different words for monks than they use for Lay people and to some degree it's like they transferred like

the no the royalty you know like the
pronouns and the and the verbs and all
that for they were used for the Kings
and the princes and so forth or they're
also used for monks just because monks
are considered to be above just ordinary
humans even if they're just ordained for
a week you know on vacation or something
still during that week there's like this
ontological change where they are no
longer regular human

beings but from a western point of view
and also probably from an ancient Indian
Point of View you're still a human I
mean there is no soul for any
ontological change to take place in so
there is

that but uh I mean there are certain changes I mean there's an old saying among the Roman Catholics that like a monk can go to hell easier than a Layman just because the the monk has like a higher higher obligations he's got more Duty you know he can he can fall from grace easier because he's got more grace to uphold so to speak so but but still I mean it's just five

Aggregates so I mean there is a question about five Aggregates farther down on this long list but um yeah so what does ordination do or

mean for teron mon it just means that
you are obligated to follow vinea rules
that you have officially renounced the
world you're like a renunciate you're a
s

Sal but that's it I mean you're still
still five five condas you're still five
Aggregates so yeah I guess I answer that
question sometimes I'm not sure if I
answer these questions but I guess I
answer that one so I'll just move on to
Indiana dh's next and last question here
is it advisable for a secular renunciant
to cease voting I have only one more
election that i' prefer to vote in and
that is for Donald Trump in November
2024

well now sweet tea is good

sometimes see um that is that's another question that I mean there's you could say that a true renunciant would would not get involved in politics at all so that's I mean that's one approach you can take I mean you wouldn't be doing wrong by not voting from a Buddhist point of

view but um it could be like Rah Doss who was one of my

first spiritual teachers in

life um he he still voted and he he was he just vote for the candidate that he considered to be more spiritually

Advanced he would sort of uplift Society

more so I mean that's that would be like
a spiritual reason for
voting but uh I mean Trump versus Biden
neither one of them strikes me as
particularly spiritual at least Donald
Trump still has all of his faculties in
uh sort of operational
mode but

uh yeah I mean in order to vote you'd
have to be you should be well-versed in
in politics and know what the like the
platforms of the different candidates
are and so forth and that would be
studying you know worldly knowledge you
know animal knowledge and so forth but
uh yeah I think that's that's your own
call I mean if your

conscience is like spurring you on to help either get one person who would help Humanity more into office or just keeping somebody who would just be just malignant out of office then you know I mean that could be a it's sort of a conscientious act but for the I think playing it safe just being totally Conservative then yeah a true renunciant would just leave all politics behind and just go his own way he' just sit in the room and meditate the world could go to hell all around him but he's meditating and he's serene so I think I'll just move on to the next

question here this is from Fred and Fred
says Hi I was having a bit of a
depression the kesas were Savage
anything in language in one's mindstream
is bogus in my opinion what's your
thoughts um so I guess my thoughts about
the depression and the Savage kesas um
yeah I don't know enough details to
really comment on that but I guess he's
asking what are my thoughts on this
third sentence here anything in language
in one's mindstream is bogus in my
opinion well language I mean it's just
symbols it's not the real thing you I
mean you cannot understand Reality by
thinking about it you cannot know
reality through language Unless somehow

the language is like in Zen where the Zen master is like the master Archer who shoots down another arrow in midair with his own arrow and so the words of the Zen master or like like that arrow that just hit you they collide with the words of somebody else and they both just fall to the ground and leave silence in their place so you can use language as a way of short circuiting you know through Paradox or or whatever language itself and just leave silence behind and Clarity and just you know direct experience of reality rather than trying to understand reality through symbols which is just a Fool's errand it's just

not going to

happen so anything in language in our

mindstream is bogus yeah I I mean

language is all symbols you know in a

symbol is just sort of a more or less

arbitrary you know form of you know

visual or or auditory or whatever trying

to represent something else like the

word tree you know the letters t r are

radically different from an actual

tree assuming that an actual tree even

exists in

reality so yeah language is a very

inferior way of trying to understand

reality

although it may be necessary for

navigating technological

samsara I mean you have to know
language to drive a car or to have a job
for example as a general
rule so I guess I'll just move on to
Fred's next question here
pure abodes seem a fair Target to Aspire
to question mark and this is also a
follow up on a previous question where
somebody asked if it's possible to
become um enlightened in heaven and I
pointed out that pure abodes were you
know only anagami who are destined for
enlightenment you know at the end of
their life are aren't even able to get
into these Heaven Realms so Fred asks if
one should aspire to these Heaven Realms

I mean according to tradition they exist
although you have no proof that they
exist and so it's kind of a gamble to
aspire to something that you don't
really know if it's really there or not
you know kind of a lot of religions
you're just basing your entire life on
this gamble that this religion that
you've joined is telling the truth and
all the other religions aren't telling
the truth or not at least not nearly as
well as the religion that you've
joined like I mean how do you know if
you're going to get saved if if you
believe in so and so I mean it's just
it's a gamble you're essentially
guessing and it may be an educated guess

because everyone in your culture
traditionally has made the same guess
but still it's a guess and uh yeah you
shouldn't aspire to anything in the text
it says you know the wise man does not
aspire to anything not even to
Enlightenment so you just do your duty
you do the best you can follow dhamma as
well as you can just because it's your
duty to do it and don't be goal oriented
in your dhamma goal oriented dhamma is a
mistake and it usually leads to
frustration and disappointment because
even if you get what you're aiming for
it's going to be different than you were
expecting it anyway so you're better off

just practicing because you feel drawn
to practice or it's your sacred duty to
practice and not because you want to get
something out of

it so I'll just move on next question

here this is also from Fred could

tobacco I have been around at the time
of Goa I think that I is just I don't
know how that I got in there but let's

just skip the Jay could tobacco have
been around at the time of Goa what

about hashish cannabis can lift you out
of a depression I have a pipe That's My
Confession well it's like a little poem

here cannabis can lift you out of

depression I have a pipe that's my

confession I don't know if you did that

on purpose or what but anyway um tobacco
it was around in the time of Goa it just
wasn't around in

Eurasia um I mean I think maybe there's
like Egyptian mummies or something that
may have Trace Amounts of not only
tobacco but cocaine in their

embalming I think I've read or heard
something about that but it wasn't
cultivated in the west I mean obviously
if it was cultivated in the west you'd
probably have it in just growing in

Fields before Columbus went to the new
world and I guess it was Sir Walter
Raleigh who brought tobacco back to
Europe like late 1500s early

1600s

so yeah I don't think tobacco was around in India in the time of Gab Buddha so that's why there's no rule against smoking tobacco that's probably the reason the only reason why there's no rule against smoking tobacco for Buddhist monks or terraa Buddhist monks is just because in the Buddhist time in Ancient India there just was no tobacco for him to

forbid what about

hashish um I assume that they were making hashish in Budan and hashish is just like the like con compacted resin of the of the cannabis plant although some people might just call cannabis

smoking cannabis in general to be
smoking hashish and yeah that definitely
was in in India in the Buddhist time and
it's mentioned in the text the the word
for uh cannabis is
banga so that also means
hemp so
um yeah so cannabis can lift you out
yeah that's I guess that's so there was
no tobacco in India in the Buddhist time
um and there was cannabis whether they
were turning the Cannabis into hashish
I'm not exactly sure but I assume they
were so I'll just move on the next
question here this is from nature cure
and this is another tobacco question

could smoking cigarettes cause one to
take rebirth in four lower
Realms um that's highly unlikely I mean
you'd have to have some really bad
mental States due to the smoking of
cigarettes I mean just smoking a
cigarette itself is just ethically
neutral just a physical action you know
is neither wholesome or un wholesome
it's the mental States involved and even
if you're just hopelessly addicted to
nicotine um I don't think that in itself
would necessarily cause mental States so
bad that you would go to hell or be
reborn as an animal or a ghost unless
maybe I mean you just have such intense
craving that it somehow messes up your

karma maybe you die you know you're just just craving a cigarette so bad and then you die with this craving mind or something that maybe you could wind up as a ghost or something maybe you just miss cigarettes so bad you know you can't smoke cigarettes in the in the ghost realm or something you just craving the cigarettes or something I don't know but as a general rule I don't think smoking cigarettes would be bad enough to uh cause you to have rebirth in the four ller Realms unless you had some Associated really un un wholesome mental States I really can't imagine such a severe un wholesome mental state

just due to craving
tobacco so I'll just move on to Nature
Cure's next question here who are 84
mahasa can they be considered as
Buddhists or even enlightened Buddhist
Masters um it's not in terra I think
maybe he's referring to the like the
ascended masters who lived in the
Himalayas that were a supposed ly
sending messages to Madame Blavatsky like in
the early theosophy days that they were
like channeling these ascended masters
in the Himalayas and if they were in the
Himalayas there's a good chance that
they were Buddhists or at least Hindus
or maybe the theosophist didn't really
differentiate between between the two

but it could have been some sort of
Tibetan

Buddhism um or just who knows I'm not I
assume Madam blatsky knew

but I mean even assuming that these 84
mahasa are uh what I'm what Madam baski
was supposedly channeling and I think
she eventually got uh kicked out of her
own organization which she helped to
found because she was caught like faking
these messages from the ascended masters
in Himalayas you know they were like
falling from the ceiling just falling
out of thin air and it turned out she
was like pulling a string which is
making them fall through a crack in the

ceiling or

something so yeah I would consider them

to be for the most part

mythology I mean if anyone can prove

their existence or show some persuasive

evidence then that's that's fine but uh

yeah I'd really take it with a grain of

salt or maybe a whole spoon of salt so

I'll just move on to Nature Cure's next

question here what sutas can I find

doctrines or theories is like only male

human can become Buddha Buddhas reside

in TC Heaven before taking human birth

five Buddhas in one Capa or facts about

previous three Buddhas or 27 Buddhas

well the uh the Buddha

wsaw and its commentaries would be the

main source of information on this kind of thing and uh there's there's this surreal series of books by H mad no not mad migga one no is that right ah man he was

Tica dasas he was the uh the reciter at the Burmese 6th Council he had memorized the entire poly toptica which in Burmese is 40 large volumes he had memorized that and uh he wrote this it was like a commentary to the Buddha wsa the lineage of Buddhas which is is dealing with this entire system of you know Buddha after Buddha after Buddha and they're all cataloged you know these sometimes this bizarre biographies like mongala Buddha

if you want to read something really
bizarre read the the the biography or
history or mythology of mongala Buddha
who lived you know a zillion gajillion
years ago on a different planet but also
in India speaking poly and so
forth

um so

yeah it's let's see

here yeah I would I would uh read the
Buddha wsa or or its commentaries or
like something like ah how come I keep
forgetting his name it's

Mig migga one no J one

no h mingun there we go

mingun he wrote this book that got
translated into English although it's

published only in Burma probably and
good luck trying to find copies of it
but uh yeah it's it's got some weird
stuff in there and I mean it's all of
this like only a male human can become a
Buddha I mean you just go over the
lineage of Buddhas you're never going to
find a female it's always male so that
you can just assume like scientifically
inductively that they have to be male
since all the ones enumerated are male
Buddhas residing to see to Heaven before
taking human birth uh I think that may
actually have its origins in the ATA
waga there's a sutta in the ATA waga
mentioning

Tu but uh it could just mean like
contented in in and then it just got
turned into a heaven realm where the
Buddhas um spend their last life as a
bodh SAT before descending to Earth and
and uh becoming a
Buddha uh five Buddhas in one CA that's
that's not necessarily the case that's
like a maximum number
that some compas might some World Cycles
might only have like two Buddhas I'm
pretty sure and the facts about or the
facts about previous three Buddhas or 27
Buddhas you you'd have to go to the
Buddha wsa or commentaries on the Buddha
wsa or books based on the Buddha
wsa to get that information but it's not

particularly useful

information because I mean it's

mythological Buddhas

80 feet tall with a lifespan of 84,000

years who lived on some previous Earth

zillions of years

ago so I'll just move on to Nature c's

next question

here and I hope I'm close to halfway

done because we've already in we've

already been in this for an hour so

let's see here nature cures next

question emitting semen or masturbation

mentioned in the potim Moka how genuine

this can be true Buddha's word question

mark how bad occasionally masturbation

can be for yogis question mark in
Hinduism Brahma charia seman is like
fuel or Elixir a sort of chemical
element in the brain that helps gain
wisdom and stuff could this be a case
for Terra vodin 2 thank you venerable
sir well yeah it is genuine I mean this
goes way back I mean the poty mocha not
I mean it's a sesa offense number one
sesa number one so it's the fifth rule
in the entire ptim Moka that a monk is
not allowed to emit semen or to
deliberately have an orgasm unless it's
in a dream while he's
asleep but if you go to sleep with a
specific intention of having a wet dream
then that's against the rules too but if

it just SP continuously happen to all
your asleep you haven't broken a rule
but for it to be that fundamental of a
rule and it's it's a garapati it's it's
a serious offense if you break this and
you've got to take Penance for six days
and six nights um yeah I mean it goes
way back it goes back to early Buddhism
all potty mokas would have this rule I'm
sure of

it so all schools of Buddhism would
agree so it goes at least as far back it
goes farther back than the first Schism
you know anything that all the schools
of Buddhism have in common you can
safely

assume pretty safely assume that it
predates the first Schism so it's like
during the first hundred years of the
existence of of
Buddhism so I mean with regard to what
is the true Buddhist word I mean that
you can't really know for
sure but it definitely goes way back the
rule saying monks are not allowed to
jerk
off no spanking the
puppy
so see how bad can occasional
masturbation be for yogis well if if
you're a monk if you're ordained then
you're just making problem after problem
because you've got these um offenses

that you have to expiate and the only way to expiate them is through the Penance and if you're not taking the Penance then it's you're never going to have pure morality at least not in the ecclesiastical

sense um in Hinduism brahmacharya seeming is like fuel or Elixir yeah it it's really not that way the reason why it's so much against the rules is a monk is supposed to be an ascetic he's supposed to avoid wallowing and sensual pleasure like householders who enjoy pleasures of the senses and so it's just wallowing and sensual pleasure by spanking the puppy it's not really you

know depleting yourself of some kind of spiritual Elixir or anything like that it's just you're wallowing in sensuality which is inappropriate for a monk I mean with regard to sensual Pleasures sex tends to be up near the top of the list of you know the most intense sensual Pleasures that a person can indulge in unless he's a drug addict or something so yeah that's the way it goes I mean dosm also considers Yang Essence to be something that a man should conserve or so I have read but um yeah in Buddhism it's not really the the SE in itself that is the issue it's it's the wallowing in sensuality just wallowing with abandon in

sensuality so I'll just move on to the next question here this is from Quick quiz and quick quiz says someone really fat like with a big belly and stuff and also married can be an enlightened

Master question mark I am not asking if they can be come enlightened I'm asking if that married fat person claims that he is enlightened could that be possible well I mean I would be wary of anyone claiming to be enlightened I think it's The Diamond Cutter Sutra I've mentioned this before that anyone who's in Arya isn't going to think or say I am an Arya you know so anyone who's bragging about how enlightened they are um yeah that's

that's a red flag right there you should
be you should be careful about people
like

that but uh I mean somebody who's obese
and married I mean neim karoli Baba was
obese and uh there's even rumors that he
was secretly married although it was
kind of a weird kind of a marriage where
according to the story neem Ki Baba he
renounced the world when he was a child
he just ran away and went off and became
a sawu in the forest and started doing
relatively Advanced athletic practices
even as a child um but the way it often
Works in India traditional India he was
betrothed you know from the time he was
an infant there was this girl that so he

considered to be like his Dharma which in Hinduism is like your duty to marry this girl because she they were betr so he married her and they had kids but I mean he was still a sawu you know he just he'd show up for the the important ceremonies and the things that had to be done and and then you know he'd just go back to being a wandering sawu and I mean he'd be one of my best guesses for anyone in the 20th century to really be fully enlightened even though he was a Hindu and obese I think he died of like some complications from

diabetes but uh I mean one of the reasons why he was so obese when he was late in in his later years is the Hindus have strange ideas about like processing other people's Karma and he did it through there were some some swamis in India who do it through cigarettes I mean they'd be smoking like several cigarettes all at the same time or money like somebody would give him money and he' just it'd be like a coin and he just kind of rub it in his fingers just kind of somehow process the money Karma of this person and maharaji I mean he could eat like five full-size meals in in succession just because people are wanting to to offer him food and he's

sort of conferring blessings on them by eating it in a sense but uh so somebody who is obese um yeah I still think it's possible for them to be fully enlightened especially if there's some spiritual reason for the Obesity or just a physical one I guess um married yeah I don't think that's necessarily uh again like a a rule breaker or something uh I mean in terab about of Buddhism you'd have to be celibate if you're fully enlightened that you just wouldn't have any craving for sex anymore more um but anyone who's going around claiming to be enlightened like maharaji

or nimoli Baba he's according to numerous testimonies he just he performed Miracles I mean he had psychic powers that would just blow people's minds but he would always deny it which in a way was

lying and so I mean according to Terabuddhism an Arya can't lie either but uh he lied and and uh still I mean when he saw you he' just look right through you he'd know more about you than you know about

you and he was obese possibly married so I mean but he wasn't claiming to be that's that's the point I was making towards the end and he would just deny everything you know or if somebody

was saying oh thank you maharaji for
curing my child or whatever he'd just
say subish high it's all God you know
God did it I didn't do anything that
kind of a thing and that's what you
would expect from a very wise person not
look at me look how enlightened I am you
know just declaring themselves an a Haun
on the the homepage of their their
website stuff like that is uh yeah I
mean I'm very skeptical and wary of
people like that because chances are
they're more like sociopathic conmen who
nevertheless have some spiritual
attainment there's no rule saying a
sociopathic con man can't have had

really deep meditative state like dead
you know the Buddhist Judas is scariot
so to speak I mean he got Jan and
psychic powers even though he's trying
to kill the Buddha according to the
tradition so I guess I answered that
question so I'll just move on to Quick
quizzes next question the next question
in his quick quiz here for both beus and
lay people is it an UNH wholesome thing
to sell translated sutras or books about
dharma does sutta say anything about
having income from dharma or similar
Deeds well for
beus it's an UNH wholesome thing to sell
anything because they're not supposed to
buy or sell once you're ordained all the

money you mean you don't have anything
to do with it anymore you have renounced
the

world um so let's just set beus

aside and so for Lay people is it UNH

wholesome to sell translated sutas or

books about DH ideally

it is best to have like dhama books as

for free distribution because dhama is

priceless you know you don't want to

like pedal

dhama um does the suda say anything

about having income from dama or similar

Deeds I can't recall that I don't I mean

it's wrong livelihood for a monk to like

give a doat talk in exchange for

anything like there there seatt in Burma
who are just not for just charging like
exorbitant prices for giving a d talk
and I mean that's just that's not D at
all that's that's really
blameworthy on for on for
them but just selling dhab books I don't
think it's necessarily A Bad Thing it
could be a good thing especially if
you're not like charging through the
nose for a d book some D books I mean
they could be really expensive like
Shambala some Shambala books can be
really spendy um but if you're selling
at cost for example like you want to
distribute these so as many people as
possible can read them but you don't

have the funds to just print up
thousands of copies and just send them
out for free then I mean the next best
thing would be just sell them at cost
you know as a kind of nonprofit sort of
thing um just to have a modest profit so
that you can kind of live on it if
you're a book seller let's say you've
got like a met a physical bookstore or
something I don't think it's wrong
livelihood to be selling like dap
translations there or you know polyx or
anything like that even for a profit I
mean it's it's less of a I mean it's
less
meritorious than just giving it away

it's less meritorious than than selling
it at Cost so that you're not making a
profit from it you're just trying to
help people as much as possible but
still I mean it's it's not on the list
of wrong livelihoods selling dhab
books so I mean in the Buddhist time
there were no dhama books so I mean
there wouldn't be any rule against
selling dhama
books um in the Buddhist time because
dama books hadn't been invented yet you
wanted D you went to a monk who had
memorize the texts and then he would
recite them or just you know give you
the gist of
them so let's see here I'll just move on

to Quick quizzes next question what's
your opinion on the meditation for kids
thing did Buddha or Terra vadin teach
kids meditation well I mean there are
stories of enlightened children in the
texts and there's a relatively famous
one about potila who was know he was
called what Tua potila which just means
like futile or pointless
potila and he was a scholar which is
kind of an anachronism this is in the
commentaries and you know he had you
know he was like an expert on the on the
poly sutas and so forth and the Buddha
would just call him you know pointless
poila and so finally he was kind of

shamed into realizing that you know studying the philosophy is not the same as actually practicing dhama and making spiritual progress you know he's just sort of like an academic so he went to a monastery and he was a senior monk at this time he was well respected so he goes off to this Monastery and tries to find um where where all of the monks there were aans including this nine-year-old novice who was an arant and all of the the senior monks they're saying no you're you're senior to us I mean we we don't want to be teaching you probably they knew that because he was a scholar that he'd be hard to teach because he'd be like trying to correct

them and so forth and
also um they wanted him to be humbled
because you know he was kind of proud at
all of his academic like accomplishments
so to speak so finally he all the other
Monks at the monastery refuse to teach
him how to meditate and so it's this
nine-year-old enlightened novice who
teaches him meditation he gives him a
really interesting meditation
instruction that you've got like a a
termite Mound that's got six holes and
you block off five of those holes
because there's a lizard inside this
termite Mountain you want to catch the
lizard when it comes out so the way you

do that is you block off five of the
holes you just leave one hole open
and then you watch that hole like a hawk
so that when the lizard comes out
you can catch it and that's a really
nice metaphor for uh kind of meditation
I used to do where you just kind of like
restrain the physical senses seeing
hearing smelling touching tasting and
you're just watching your own mind you
know that's the Sixth Sense base and
when a thought starts to arise you not
it and that was that was a kid so I mean
in that sense you know enlightened
children or just you know child novices
you know ordained semi orain children
would be taught

meditation but it wouldn't be some special kind of meditation like nowadays um you know it's like teaching kids to meditate is sort of like it's guided meditation where you're just telling them you know just imagine that you're you're getting bigger and bigger until you're you're as big as this whole Dharma hall and then you're getting bigger and bigger you're you know this entire town is inside of you and and then you're like feeling love towards the the people you know it's sort of like this imagination game where children you know they don't have the attention span of most adults and they

need something easy that they can sort
of get a grip on so you would teach them
that kind of like visualizing things
with a guided meditation for not very
long probably because within a
relatively short time they're going to
start getting restless and fidgeting and
talking and stuff so I don't think
there's anything wrong with that at all
so long as you you you can do it you
know in a in a daric way that's actually
benefiting
them so let's see
here well yeah I mean there's no special
guided meditation for kids in the texts
that if the kid had enough Talent enough
Pary then you could teach him you know

some techniques that were appropriate for anybody you know generally adults and then he could still practice it but uh yeah the special kid meditations where you're you know you're telling them to imagine themselves getting bigger or smaller or they just guided meta meditation in a way that kids can kind of relate to that yeah that's that's not in the text but it doesn't mean that it's bad or anything so long as it's helping them and giving them a little taste of what meditation is like it could be a good thing although I mean you consider how to punish children nowadays it's like a timeout you make

them sit in the corner and uh you know
it's kind of like
using sort of contemplative reflection
as a punishment on kids because they're
so

hyperactive so I guess I'll just move on
to Quick quizzes next and last
question is it possible for a Hermit or
aesthetic person to have a glimpse of
nibana without proper or intense dhamma
teachings and sitting meditation but
only from sa batana and basic DH and is
it possible that he doesn't really know
that he attains some level of
Enlightenment well the first this is
like two questions I should separate
these because that's just the way I

am okay so the first part is it possible
for a Hermit or aesthetic person to have
a glimpse of nibana without proper or
intense Med dhama teachings and sitting
meditation but only from sa batana and
basic dhama well sa batana is advanced
practice in in some way sa batana is
like

very profound Advanced effective dama
practice in fact in the sa patana sutta
the Buddha says if you practice
intensive sa patana for a week you're
pretty much guaranteed of Enlightenment
or at least becoming an anagami
so yeah I think it's definitely
possible if you know enough about

Buddhism to know just basic you know for noble truths and so forth and also you practice sa batana you know 247 you know all waking

hours then yeah I think you can definitely get some high attainment through doing

that so just move on to the next part of this last question is it possible that he doesn't really know that he attains some level of

Enlightenment

um I mean you know what you've attained you might not you might not know exactly what kind of attainment it is like where where it fits on any kind of scale anything like that but you know what you

know I mean you know what you've
experienced so I mean he'd have to know
to some degree just
experientially that I mean you're Sam
Sara is not what it used to be you know
you no longer look upon the world the
way you used to look upon
it but uh I mean still you might not
know what the word arant you know you
might not know the jargon or the the
techn the tech uh technical terms I
almost said technological
terms
so yeah I mean I guess uh eart TOA in
his first famous book you know he
attained something and he didn't know

what it was and it wasn't until after
he'd been uh Consulting with spiritual
teachers that he finally realized that
he had attained some kind of
Enlightenment so I mean if you accept
earth TOA as a an an authority figure
then I guess the answer would be yes so
I'll just move on to EU Diva and her
question or I guess diva is a
female aren't they I think diva is like
Latin for goddess or
something similar to the Sanskrit
Davy so anyways EU Diva says what's your
thoughts on Asian parti universities for
a yogi who doesn't have much faith in
monasteries
is it a good way to prosper well if you

don't have much faith in monasteries you go to a the standard Burmese parot University and you can have even less faith in monasteries because as a general rule Monas monastic schools in Burma are snake pits I mean they're just the monks there they're out to get a degree you know they want to move up in the ecclesiastical hierarchy or they want to get some impressive degree after their name to add to their clout as a dama teacher or whatever as a general rule they don't follow V rules they make no effort I I lived at a uh a monastic school um mahag gandon in amarapura in central Burma for about a little over a

year and it had a reputation for being very strict you know it had a good reputation for how maintaining monastic standards which meant that maybe 5% of the monks were making any effort at all to follow the the vinia rules and with regard to the novices it was maybe 2% tops so and and and most of the the monastic schools the pariti universities um with with like monks there I mean they're just they're just awful really I mean anybody who wants to learn dhama and practice dama should just stay away from such places I mean maybe in Thailand or something it's different different but in Burma they're just they're snake pits as a general

rule I mean it's just dhama and vinia is
it's just something you read about in
books but don't

practice so you better off if you want
to study I me you want to learn true
dhama and practice true dhamma then
you're better off going to a reputable
Forest

Monastery with like a an Abbot who
actually has some wisdom
and not and don't even bother with
Buddhist

Academia I mean in the west or the
East because in the west it's mostly
queer studies dhama kind of stuff and in
the East it's it's just

dogmatism and this dog Dogma that that
isn't practiced as a general rule so
we'll just move on to eud Diva's next
question here if a yogi really want to
pursue dhama or Enlightenment how
important is poly well it is helpful
it's not absolutely
necessary but it can give you certain
advantages if you can read poly
then you get closer to the original
teachings it's not filtered through a
translation anymore unless I mean you're
still filtering it through your own
translation I guess but just even just a
familiarity with the main technical
terms
like good thing I still have this on the

table just you know studying up on like
this little book the Buddhist dictionary
it's not very

often you can get it for free for free
distribution and it just explains the
technical terms you know like the main
philosophical poly terms and what they
mean at least according to Orthodox
tradition and it's definitely helpful I
mean if you want to be um if you want to
practice terab Buddhism and understand
terror of Buddhism you almost have to
know quite a few poly terms and uh I
mean just to know how to conjugate verbs
and stuff is not so important but um it
is good to know the original uh

philosophical terms and not rely on translations which sometimes are not so good like canker or taint for Asawa is not it's it's standard but it's it's not a very good translation in my opinion so I'll just move on to EU

Diva's next and last question is it really possible for beus to survive without money these days yeah that's that's fairly easy especially in Asia like Buddhist Asia it's easy even though monks want to believe it's not easy in fact monks might want to believe it's not even possible I did it for 30 years no problem in in the west and in the East so yeah I remember once I was a junior monk I only been a monk for three

or four years I was very strict in vinea
and I was staying at Maha mahag gandai
on that school monastery
right and uh some Sri Lankan monks were
visiting and somebody one of the Burmese
monks told them that I didn't handle
money and they were like amazed and
they're like how do you manage and I
said well I managed the way the monks
managed in the Buddhist time it's like
it was the Buddha who made it against
the

rules so I mean monks want to believe
that you can't do it unless you handle
money nowadays but it's just not true
because I I managed without difficulty

really I mean sometimes it can be damned inconvenient and sometimes it can be scary like you're at an airport you're traveling internationally with no money and no attendant then yeah it can be scary like you're at this airport all by yourself and you show your ticket to the the girl behind the counter and she types in the the ticket number and frowns types it in again and frowns calls the manager who comes over and they're talking in a language you don't understand and he types it in and and nothing and frowns and then it's like you're starting to sweat you know it's like man am I going to get out of this airport am I going to get my

flight so stuff like that can
happen I mean you might have to go
without food for a few days if you're
traveling uh but I mean you're not going
to die you fast for two
days so yeah it's it's easy it's
relatively easy and monks who say
otherwise are just trying to give
excuses for being LAX monks so I'll just
move on next question here this is from
White Ash Piper and white ash Piper says
I don't know seems to me that passion is
one of the life spices that make life
fun I don't see how anyone can ever
escape yin and yang did you ever
consider dosm if

so what was it that caused you to refuse
dosm was it that reality isn't nothing
but an

illusion so this is kind of a kind of a

PO per of questions here kind of

combined into one let's see passion is

one of the life spices to make life fun

yeah well I mean it causes you to be

attached to life and existence which

keeps you stuck in some Sara so by

avoiding that passion then you make life

Less Fun which is appropriate for a

serious

Buddhist let's see I don't see how

anyone can ever escape yin and yang well

I mean yin and yang are going to be

there I mean you can everything is like

a balance of opposites this universe is
a balance of opposites you know even the
the hydrogen atom there's a balance of
you know positive nucleus and negative
electrons you

know so there's all this bounce of of
like opposite forces and so forth that
make this universe even possible so the
only way you escape from that is by
escaping from the universe which is
presumably getting out of some

sorrow and then you just don't get
reborn and here he says did you ever
consider

dism and if so what was it that caused
you to refuse D well I've I mean I've

read the da Ching I've read the the
xangang and uh yeah I was impressed by
that I've got like three different
translations of The Da Ching on that vot
case back there I've read it several
times or even many times um and I've
considered DSM I mean it's got wisdom to
it although it struck me that there was
no real structure to it I mean I never
came across a doist monastery or just
Dost rules for how to just become
enlightened anything like that it it
didn't have like the support structure
that Buddhism has and nowadays there are
Scholars who are saying that dosm could
just be a Corruption of Buddhism
anyway that loudu could have just been

like a mythological iCal equivalent to
gab Buddha that Lau was not really a
historical person in China that he's
sort of mythological and just a lot of
goab Buddha just got absorbed into the
legend of Lau so that's possible too in
which case I'm kind of a follower of the
original

dosm but uh yeah I mean I like the D
Jing and so forth but I mean there's
it's just too

too vague or just there's not enough
structure to really guide practice and
I'm and I've been told that most like
traditional dosm is like magic and
people trying to go against the Dow by

you know trying to live forever and so forth

so yeah I mean I I think there is some serious dosm there's probably serious Dost practitioners maybe even serious Dost monastery

but I've never really come across them Buddhism is easier to find it's much more accessible and it just has a more clearcut approach to how you go about practicing

DMO so then I'll next qu part of this question from White Ash Piper is have you ever looked into Tom Campbell my big toe Tom is a VR guy assume that means virtual reality Tom is a v virtual reality guy he's a bright man retired

ired physicist from NSA maybe that's
NASA

NASA and considers himself a
Consciousness expert he started his
journey at the Monroe Institute whatever
that is working with Bob Monroe and his
binary beats program which induces outof
body experiences basically Tom believes
that we are in a virtual reality for the
simple reason to become love we
reincarnate over and over again unforced
to learn how to become Lov love he also
teaches the opposite of Love is fear and
fear is the obstacle we have to overcome
to learn to be love anyways this has
gone on long enough he's worth a listen

in closing I'll add this Tom always reminds people to be skeptical of everything including his big toe yeah i' I've never heard of Tom Campbell it's a long question and uh yeah I really I've never heard of Tom

Campbell I've uh he says we're in a virtual reality I can me so long as the virtual reality isn't inside some computer which would assume that there's some sort of physical reality that's real it's just we're not in it um no we're in a virtual reality that's is like a dream like a self-generating dream that's arising from chaos because chaos contains all possibilities within it and one possibility is this

possibility so here it
is so we I don't think we're in a
virtual reality for the simple reason to
become love unless
love Is Just Enlightenment in general
like my my definition of Love is
acceptance so if you have perfect love
where you have just have perfected love
then you just accept everything
wholeheartedly then there's no longer
any boundaries between you and anything
else so that you really don't exist
anymore so that'd be like
an so I've I've read before that fear is
the obos the opposite of love I think
maybe J Krishna mury might have said

that also I know there's a number of teachers that say fear is the opposite of love but I mean if love is acceptance then the opposite of acceptance would be rejection you know instead of the opposite of yes is no you know the opposite of you know just completely abolishing Pink Floyd's wall is just to have this wall completely surrounding you and locked up with no no holes and I don't think that's necessarily fear I mean if you want to equate fear with rejection you know since love is acceptance fear would be the opposite of love if the opposite of acceptance is rejection then the opposite of Love

would be something equivalent to rejection which I mean hate I mean it's just common sense that love and hate are opposites although I mean the ultimate love probably has no opposite just says if if love is Enlightenment then really I mean Enlightenment does doesn't have an opposite to say unenlightenment is the opposite of Enlightenment is just sort of a a

misunderstanding that I mean you get to this absolute state it has no opposites there's no more

Duality so if you want to say that fear is rejection well obviously it's a kind of rejection it's like you know get that

away from me as fast as

possible but I mean there's other kinds

of rejection too I mean there's angry

rejection which maybe he's saying is

fear also

but yeah I just I don't know anyways the

the short answer to this is I've never

heard of Tom Campbell or his big

toe so I guess I can't be skeptical of

his big toe since there's no proof that

he exists or that his big toe exists so

I'm just going to move on to the next

question here and this is from

Jeremy and Jeremy says is it true that

peka Buddhas only exist when there is

not a sama Sam Buddha is there a suas to

support that why can there not be both

at the same time well it is terod and tradition that peka Buddhas which are like hermit Buddhas that don't teach dhama exist only in between times of Buddha sasas you know you've got a Buddha who rediscovers Dharma and then he teaches it and so then you've got Buddhism you've got dhama in the world and then eventually because everything that has a beginning has an end you know that dispensation dies out and then You' got this Dark Age where there's no dhama and that's when PAB buddas arise but they don't cause dhama to rearise because they're Hermits they they either don't or can't teach dhama and that's

this standard

terab um tradition teaches

this um you read some Mahayana text and

they've got PR pra Buddhas just

redefined in some weird way where You'

got

you know groups of you know hundreds of

pra Buddhas coming to listen to the

discourses of of goab Buddha and yeah

they just kind of took the the ball and

ran with it and just ran in a ran

completely off the field I think but uh

is there a sutas to support that I'm

pretty sure there is I just don't know

which one it

is but uh there are sutas you know

giving lists of the names of famous peka

buddas that I mean I'm pretty sure they just did not exist during the they were like before the time of goab

budha but I mean this is all kind of mythological there's no way to really prove any of it so it's you don't really need to know this stuff for sure which is good because you can't really know it for sure far as I can

tell just checking to make sure that the camera is

running man I had to just like a few months ago I had to do the same Q&A twice just because I thought the camera was running and it wasn't you know I clicked the button and everything and

for some reason it just didn't
record so let's
see yeah just going with Orthodoxy Pacha
Buddhas only exist when there is not a
sasam Buddha or when there is no
Buddhism you know when his sasana his
dispensation is still extent in this
world there's no Pacha buddist and why
is that it's just this cause MC law I
mean it's it's weird in in like Orthodox
terab Buddhism and just ancient Indian
thought you know there's just this I
can't remember what it's called I think
veruna was the god of it it's just this
like Cosmic
order that I mean there're just these
rules that the world has to operate in a

certain way it's sort of like like the laws of physics to a modern scientist you know they they can't say why these laws are the way they are they can just say they are the way they are and you that's the way it is so like getting back to the Buddha was that I mentioned earlier just the the chronicle of Buddhas this the the lineage of Buddhas you know every single Buddha has to go through the same stages where he's he has to renounce the world and he has to renounce the world in one of four different ways you know he either walks he rides a horse he rides a chariot or he rides a a flying mansion and he's

always has to have the attendant and then he's got to practice austerities for X number of years and then he's got to become enlightened sitting under a bod tree but the bod tree for different Buddhas is different some might be sitting under a different kind of tree some of them might even sit under a bamboo Clump but it has to be they have to be sitting under a tree when they become enlightened and why is this why does Abid dama say you have to have 17 mind moments for every moment of matter they don't say why they just say that's the way it is and it's it's the same with peka Buddhas Pacha Buddhas exist only when there is no Buddhist

dispensation there's no other dhama in
the world just because that's the way it
is and if that's insufficient for a
Westerner who wants to know the reasons
for things well it's just too bad isn't
it I mean why is the charge of the
electron the way it is why is Gravity
the way it is we don't
know so I'll just move on to the next
question here this is from seac and sead
Zina and covac and CAD Zam asks a maama
question so I gonna put on The maama
Fez oh such a nice
Fez okay I'm
ready and it's purely coincidental that
it matches with my wife beer here

so cacin CAD zida says I always assumed
nagar matched the C Trona the most since
he rejected the Abid dharmas and made no
mention of any Mahayana ideas in his
canonical Works however I read that
nagara rejected the nominalism of the
Sal Trona school where they rejected
nibana having a real Essence wait a
minute here I read that nagar rejected
the nominalism of the ctron school where
they rejected Nana having a real Essence
do you remember nagara ever refuting
this because I would have thought nagar
would have applied the same nominalism
to not just nibana but everything due to
it being
empty well um yes I mean the main text

the most influential text that is uncontroversially by Nagarjuna is the Mula maadhyakaksha and he shoots down all assertions really I mean that's what maadhyaksha is based on it's like any kind of samsaric assertion even a samsaric assertion regarding nibhana and any any assertion made in language is going to be symbolic and samsaric even if you're trying to discuss nibhana then yeah it's it's all invalid is is invalid isn't is invalid is and isn't is invalid and neither is nor isn't is invalid there's nothing you can assert one way or the other that's going to be valid and that would include the

existence of n

so yeah I think

uh the uh rejection the Sal Trona

school's rejection of nibana having a

real existence I

mean yeah you can't say that it does you

can't say that it doesn't you can't say

it does and doesn't you can't say that

it neither does nor doesn't have a real

existence it's just off the scale with

capital letters off the scale even the

is

capitalized and most most people

especially westerners well just people

in general they cannot they cannot grasp

this and you can't grasp it but they

they don't feel comfortable not being

able to grasp reality with their intellect because they're just stuck in their intellect and that's one reason why so many intellectuals don't get mysticism at all they just they just despise it they think mysticism is just [—] but that's the only way you have any hope of knowing reality is by transcending just going beyond the symbols of the intellectual mind and so Nagar would not have he would not I mean n how do I say this Nagar would not have asserted the real existence of Nirvana because he wouldn't assert the real existence of anything he might not assert their

non-existence

either but yeah I don't think he

asserted uh the real existence of

Nirvana and whether nagara himself was a

member of the Sal Trona school I don't

know I have read that he was a member of

some other sect other than

terada you know one of the Prem Mahayana

sects and I think they know what school

he belonged to but I can't remember if

it's ctron or not I think maybe it isn't

I seem to recall some other name of a

school of Buddhism that nagar was

ordained in but apparently he was a

Maverick and may have rejected his own

some of his own schools dogmas pretty

much as I ASA ordained Terra Vaden uh

rejected some Orthodox tenets and dogmas just because I mean I just could not swallow them they just did not strike me as as uh likely to be true and it's like in India in Ancient India the school of Buddhism that you adopted was largely just a matter of whatever School of Buddhism was predominant in your area you know it wasn't like you pick and choose which school you like the best so much as you know the local monasteries and all the local monasteries are all this school of Buddhism so if you're attracted to Buddhism you just join that one so I think I'll

uh think I'll just move on to se action

Cod Z as next

question because we're moving up on two

hours here and I still got quite a few

to go and he says I remember you

mentioning a book that says Terra and

sasti V here taking The Fez off for a

little while here teach that physical

matter can be known directly however

some mahasi tradition teachers like utad

biku have said that all we know is

conscious experience does this mean that

they are teaching unorthodox teachings

with respect to the terrible all uh yeah

yeah they're being unorthodox although I

agree with them I'm I'm unorthodox too

all you can know is conscious experience

because knowing itself is
conscious like the only way you can know
the existence of anything like say this
cell phone I mean you don't know the
physicality of that cell phone you just
know how it looks because that's that's
seeing Consciousness that's eye
Consciousness how it feels in your hand
you know that's tactile
Consciousness you know when it when it
beeps or whatever when the the the ring
ringtone comes up which on this phone is
is Godzilla the ringtone is is the Roar
of Godzilla um I mean that's that's ear
auditory Consciousness the only way you
know that phone exists is through

various modes of Consciousness and just
mentality and you take away all the
mentality and all you got left is just
this

void so I would agree that all you can
really know is conscious experience but
according to ter of Buddhism yeah and
yeah it's like most of the the so-called
hinana schools believe that physical
matter is ultimately real and you can
know this and the the Indian philosophy
book I was reading where I I studied
this it was kind of interesting it was
this Indian philosophy book was based on
a medieval Indian comparative philosophy
books and it was you know from a Hindu
perspective or a viic perspective but

you know they tried to give a fair representation of the other schools um you know the various Hindu schools um but also the the non Buddhist the non-vedic schools including Buddhism and jism and so forth and um there was the the way they divided up Buddhism they divided up into four different categories which is those which say that nothing is real that you can't know anything and that would be maamaa at least from their interpretation then there the school that says only mind is real and so all you can know is mind that would be yogachara which is these are the two main Mahayana schools at

least in India at the time and then there's physical matter is real and you can infer its existence logically and know that it exists through inference and that was the C Trona school so the apparently the ctron schools uh School believed that physical matter was still ultimately real and then there was sarasti Vada and Terra would fit into the same category where it's saying that not only is physical matter real but you experience it directly you know its existence as a fact because you experience that physical matter directly and I don't see how that's even possible I've had debates with a follower of the P method which is very

Orthodox and much more Orthodox than
mahasi and uh I mean he just didn't get
it I'm try like getting him to read
Barkley and this kind of thing just to
show him I all you can know is mind
because knowing is
mental but he just didn't get it he was
a nice guy though nice a nice venerable
one so I guess I'll just move on to
setion sead Z's next
question piggybacking on a question from
last week week what are your thoughts on
the translations by Maurice Walsh KR
Norman Caroline Rees
Davids G GC P mentions her John D
Ireland anada Joy which I assume is

Ananda joy and the bodh satva Ken

wheeler and then in parenthesis after

Ken wheeler he's got PB

uh and I don't know what pbuh stands for

I've got these horizontal bars of light

across my face and and chest and so

forth and so I have to adjust the blinds

on the on the window just a second see

if this

works there we

go oh

yeah so what what pbu stands for I don't

know anyone who knows that can just

leave a a comment in the comments below

because when I see an

acronyms is that right no not an

acronyms acronyms when I see letters

that stand for something and I don't know what they stand for it kind of bothers me I mean when I first came back to America I didn't even know what a mil was and LOL it took me a long time to figure out the LOL means laugh out loud and not lots of luck or little old lady or

something so

anyway COO of action CAD zon is asking me what are my thoughts on the translations by Maurice Walsh well I'll just go I'll just go through the list here Maurice Walsh the only transl by Walsh I've read is his translation of the dean Naya which is a competent

translation he did have the advantage of not being Shackled to Teravan and Orthodoxy the way some monks would be or just some dogmatists would be and so I think it's it's a reasonably good translation KR Norman um I I actually was corresponding with KR Norman a little bit when I was a monk and he's one of the main translators for the Polych Society or at least he used to be he's probably very old by now and um it was kind of interesting to me that I mean I was sort of um just discussing certain terms and so forth in the texts and he he wrote back to me saying that really he's not a Buddhist he's not even interested in

Buddhism you know he doesn't care about
Buddhist philosophy he's a philologist
he just he doesn't care what the texts
mean he just cares what they say I mean
he actually told me that he doesn't care
what the texts mean he just cares what
they say but how can you know what it
says if you don't know what it means
like some words have multiple meanings
like dharm for example if you don't know
what it means how are you GNA know how
to translate dhama into English since
there's it's not just a word you know
one word and one word it's like there's
numerous possible ways of interpreting
it so I mean he's just a philologist and

with regard to the language he
understands the language really well he
understands the language probably better
than anybody else as far as I know and I
guess he was he's the one who's working
on the new poly English dictionary I
don't know how far he got with it I
haven't seen any copies of it but uh you
know he's he understands procrit
languages you know he is he is a
linguist and uh so with regard to
non-philosophical stuff he's a good
translator but if you get into
philosophical stuff like like the AA
waga I don't he's not very reliable I
was not satisfied with K Norman's
translation of the ATA waga of the suata

because he just didn't get it he didn't understand what it was he was translating but I mean he like poly grammar the sentences sentence structure and so forth he's got it down so next is Caroline Rees Davids and yeah she's just kind of kind of an embarrassment I think the reason why she got into translating poly Tex is simply because her husband was into it who was uh I can't remember the acronyms of his name Reese Davids you know he was one of the first uh one of the two main authors of the the extant poly English dictionary which is uh up there on the bookcase somewhere you that up on the

top shelf in the the ugly turquoise blue
cover and

I mean her translation style was just
this she had like this flowery poetical
style of translating which is like um
she translated the terata you know the
elders verses but her translation that
the title was Psalms of the Brethren you
know that's just kind of the way she
translated and she was one of the first
of the western Buddhists who just
absolutely insisted that anata was
[—] and that
that was just like a later addition
mainly because deep down she was a
Christian and she liked the idea of an
eternal soul and just could not stand

any wisdom tradition that denied the existence of her beloved Eternal Soul and so um yeah she she's pretty much of an embarrassment and her translations are all pretty much

obsolete her understanding of Buddhism is not very good in my opinion now C Pond mentions her in his book studies and origins of Buddhism because it is true that she brought up the the the idea

that what you see in the text you know didn't necessarily originate with the Buddha himself that there was like um like an evolution of Buddhist philosophy and you know you're going to have older

material that's more reliable and later
material that's less reliable and GC
Pond apparently was influenced by by
that idea of her
but mainly she was just trying to
explain why some Buddhist
teachings differ from her opinions that
her opinions were probably going to take
precedence over Orthodox Dogma in
certain respects like anat for
example so yeah Caroline ree Davids um
she's not a good translator in my
opinion and she did not have the best
grasp of
the subtleties of
dhama John D Ireland I can't recall
reading anything by John D Ireland maybe

he may have done a translation of the
udana quite a while ago that I read as a
junior monk maybe he was the translator
or a translator of that and uh yeah I
didn't I don't I don't recall it well
enough to know how good of a translator
he was I didn't know paully well enough
at the time really to to say so let's
just skip John D Ireland Ananda jod I
don't even know who that is and Ken
wheeler of course the pbuh Ken
wheeler yeah I he just butchers Paulie
he's another he's sort of a a follower
of Caroline Reese Davids without
realizing it because he also just cannot
stand the idea of anab that that the

Buddha really did not assert the existence of an eternal soul and so he just mangles and stretches and twists and tortures the poly language to make it say what he wants it to say and even though he claims to be one of the world's leading authorities if not the world's leading Authority on the poly language and on early Buddhism he's a snake oil salesman sorry to say I mean I don't want to be badmouthing people gratuitously but I was asked my question of his translations and they they just they're the worst of the lot but then he would say it's just because I'm a dogmatist I'm stuck in my ways and

narrow-minded and don't realize that you know whatever so I'll just move on to the next question here also from covac and sead

zida this is his let's see let's count them shall we one two three four his fourth and last question in sutina 12:15 the Buddha says this world kachana for the most part depends upon a duality upon the notion of existence and the notion of non-existence but for one who sees the origin of the world with wisdom there is no notion of non-existence in regard to the world and for one who sees the cessation of the world with wisdom there is no notion of existence in in

regard to the world all exists kachana
this is one extreme all does not exist
this is the second extreme without
veering towards either of these extremes
the Daga teaches the dhma by the middle
which is dependent Cor ing the Buddha
says that existence and non-existence
don't apply to the world not even
talking about nibana I know nagar has
something to say about this relating to
dependent origination and emptiness but
I'm not sure what are your thoughts on
Buddha defining this as Right View here
and what does it mean well we're getting
back into nagar and majamaa so the Fez
goes back
on it's important to get the eye

centered otherwise it doesn't have the
full

effect okay well I mean this sūtra I think
it's the kachana sūtra something along
those lines is referenced by Nagarjuna
several times in his mūlakaṇṭhaka I mean it's
like most or many of his arguments are
based on this sūtra I mean this seems to
be one of his main inspirations and it's
it was in a kind of Sanskrit it wasn't
the Pali version but it was the
equivalent sūtra in like Buddhist hybrid
Sanskrit

so yeah I mean it's like Mahāyāna Buddhism
is largely based on this sūtra this
discourse to kachana about how existence

is one extreme non-existence is the
Other Extreme and so the Daga teaches
the dhama by the middle which is
dependent core

rising and then also there's a a similar
sutum that I've referenced a number of
times at least on my blog called the
cosmologist I think biku's translation
it's called the cosmologist it's it's in
biku's translation of the samut Naya I
think it's the same Sam Utah as this one
is in and it's there's four things this
this worldly philosopher he comes to the
Buddha and he asks him I mean pretty
much the same with regard to kach does
does everything exist and the Buddha
says that's that's the first philosophy

of the world and then he says well then
does it everything not exist and then
the Buddha says that's the second
philosophy of the world then the the
worldly philosopher says well then is
everything a unity and the Buddha says
that's the third philosophy of the world
and then the Phil the worldly
philosopher says well then is everything
a multiplicity and the Buddhist says
that's the fourth philosophy of the
world and then he teaches those are all
extremes and the the tag teaches the way
by the middle which is dependent cor
rising and then they got the stock
formula of the 12 nidana Theory stuck at

the end of the suta which just pretty much is in congruent with the very idea of that multiplicity is an extreme view because of course the 12 nidana theory is multiplistic if that's a word you know it just takes for granted multiplicity and the Buddha had just said that multiplicity is an extreme view that the Buddha doesn't follow he goes between extremes using dependent color Rising

so let's see

here let's see the Buddha says that existence and non-existence don't apply to the world not even talking about Nana I know Nar has something to say about this relating to dependent origination

EMP yeah the mulaka the whole book is based on that pretty much at least in in uh Essence what are my thoughts on Buddha defining this is Right View here and what does it mean well explaining dependent core Rising is so difficult that according to the legend the Buddha himself almost became a pea Buddha and just remained silent on the issue because he figured nobody would understand it and if he couldn't teach it how am I going to teach it and it's like I think he was right because nowadays almost nobody understands dependent core Rising it was like early on monks that didn't understand

dependent core Rising just slapped
together this 12 Nana Theory and just
took this verbatim and just stuck it in
like a like a module into these sutas
about dependent cor rising or
pichao but I mean it's like I mean I've
explained this before I mean it's hard
to understand but it's like none of this
is ultimately real there is no inherent
self

Essence so you've got conditions that
are virtually real that are like like
causing what whatever it is that you're
you're attending to to seem real and all
of these causes are themselves the same
the same thing where you've got all
these other virtual causes causing that

and you so you've got this entire
virtual system like conditioning it's
like mutually conditioning itself you
know every single part is being
conditioned by all the other virtual
parts and none of it is ultimately real
to the extent that none of it has any
inherent self
essence and it's very hard to understand
it's very hard to
explain but U maybe if you read the mul
jamaka karak a good translation of it I
guess um one translator is David
kalupahana
I think he's Hawaiian and he tries to
translate it more or less in accordance

with Terra voden philosophy and I haven't read it but that's that's like what I've read I've read the criticism of the book you know the critics say that kalupahana tries to turn nagar into some kind of Terra so maybe that that would be better than the the version I read which was a Tibetan translator or Tibetan scholar who's a Westerner but he specialized in Tibetan Buddhism and he translated the mulama gakara from Tibetan instead of from the original Sanskrit so let's see here I think maybe I've answered this question even though maybe nobody will understand the answer but yeah this the Su to kachana

um in the Samu nikaya is really one of
the main Inspirations of maaka

Buddhism so I think I'll just move on to
the next question here take the Fez back
off this is from

Stevens and Steven says I always feel
sentimental when I go home and that's a
type of Bittersweet emotion and it's
hard to let go of that kind of suffering
should I just be mindful of it and try
to overcome my sentimental nature well I
mean this question reminds me very
strongly of the first time I came home
to visit my parents after I'd been in
Burma as a monk for like seven years was
it seven years yeah it was like seven

years and I remember I got picked up at the airport by a friend of mine and we're driving closer and closer to my hometown of Aberdeen where my parents were and I was just feeling this dread in my heart and my friend who was driving me there he wanted to make a stop somewhere else and that was like this relief it's like ah you know I get like a half hour reprieve from from going home and facing the parents and I get home and it was just like this strain in my heart and my parents you know in a way they're happy to see me but in a way they're really sad because I was like a monk who had just left the country and they hadn't seen me in years

and I was just going to be staying there
a few weeks and then just go right back
to Asia

again and after you know making my hell
and giving the hugs and everything I
wanted to just kind of sit in this
little cabin in the backyard

and I just cried my eyes out I just
these racking sobs and I really didn't
understand why it was mainly just kind
of the pain I knew was in my parents
from missing me and and loving me and
I'm gone and I'm a monk who has
renounced the world and

everything so I can I can relate to this
question it's it was like a really

intense kind of sentimentality where I was just like booh hooing all over the place back there in the cabin um so the question here is should I I just be mindful of it and try to overcome my sentimental nature well that's two different things I mean be mindful of it yes but you don't necessarily try to overcome it I mean like struggling against it just reinforces it so just being mindful of it is good enough whether it stays or goes is irrelevant so long as you're mindful of it so I guess that's that's a good enough answer for that one I hope should I just be mindful of it and try to over

yeah because you shouldn't be goal oriented

in your dhama you just be mindful of what's going on right here right now you know be here now as ROM dos used to say and you know let the let the future take care of itself so don't try to overcome your sentimental nature so much as just understand it thoroughly you know sort of like Jay Krishna mury used to say you know just just be aware of the way things are don't set up some kind of idealism against the way things actually are because the way things actually are is going to win know you just you try to live according to an ideal according to

Krishna mury it just causes you to
become dishonest you become a hypocrite
because you can't live up to your ideals
and then I mean even early Buddhism the
Ana waga says this too if you you're
setting up this system that you're
supposed to follow then you're setting
yourself up for failure and then there's
all this remorse and self- rebuke and so
forth that is just better off avoided so
just be mindful of it and that's just
the way it is you know if you've got an
over a sentimental nature then that's
just the way it is just be mindful of it
and if the mindfulness weakens it and
that's that's that's okay
too so we'll just move on to Stevens's

next question

here did we ever hear Vivid accounts of
the times you tried psychedelics and
what was that like for you it seems many
Western monks have tried in their
explorations of reality before ordaining
can we hear your stories about what that
was was like for you and did it do
anything for you or did you get any
realizations from

it well I'm really we we've already gone
over two hours so I can't really go into
like explicit details lots of
stories which I could do I
suppose oh excuse

me Thanksgiving leftover burps got to

love

them but but um yeah I think most of the
the men of approximately my age who were
ordained as monks had had previously
taken

psychedelics you know it's not not just
any kind of drugs not like narcotics or
something amphetamines that kind of
thing but like the so-called mind
expanding drugs like LSD mushrooms maybe
masculine and it just opens up I mean
it's sort of

induces mystical States at least in me
it does almost every time I I took LSD I
had some kind of religious experience
and it was like a mystical state where
um it's like it just seems more real

than your ordinary you know Normy kind
of perception of the world you know
you're in a more intense more expansive
State you know it's it's sort of like
Jesus says in the Bible you know in you
must become like a little child to
attain the kingdom of heaven and it's in
a way it does make it like a little
child because it's sort of breaking down
this you know these
habitual approaches or habitual views
that you have towards the world you know
it's like you're seeing everything for
the first time and you're just wide
awake and like five minutes can take an
hour to go by and that kind of a

thing and uh just because it causes you to become more conscious more aware in a way more wise even though you might be stumbling around and people might think that you're completely messed up still I mean you're seeing the world from a different direction and it just gives you this Insight that the way you usually look at the world isn't the only possible way and it's not even necessarily the best way so then that inspires the person to like try to cultivate these expanded states without the chemicals which leads them to meditation and then which leads them if they're serious about understanding reality then it leads them to Buddhism

and ordination and just really going for it and trying to cultivate this expanded higher state of consciousness without having to take the the pill or the little square of paper or whatever it is

so can we hear your stories about what it was like for you uh see did it do anything for you or did you get any realiz izations from it the main realization is just that you know the Normy way of looking at reality is not the only way and it's not necessarily the best way of looking at the world and then from that it inspires you to look for you know to cultivate these expanded

States or these mystical States or whatever and uh I don't think it's necessary for me to uh go into stories about specific trips I have taken and we just we just kind of don't have time for it I guess maybe I mean I'm pretty sure I have done videos just specifically about drugs and some people will say like my father you know drugs are just an escape from reality but I mean the the way we ordinarily see the world isn't reality and also some people say well it's just drug indu these experiences you're having but that reminds me of um it's a my favorite novels dostv is the idiot and there's this scene where the he's the idiot you

know Prince Michigan he's walking
through St Petersburg I think and just
thinking that he has these mystical
States right before he has an epileptic
seizure he's got epilepsy and he just
has these seizur sometimes and it's
like right before the seizure there's
like this Split Second when everything
is just beautiful and perfect and God
you know it's just like
Perfection just Mystic Perfection and
then comes the seizure and the Darkness
and the horror and the and the misery
and all that but he says that that one
Split Second makes it worth it and there
there have been times when I was

meditating when I mean just years of
just struggling and floundering and just
being unhappy and so forth was worth
that five minutes of meditation I mean
you get into these expanded just Crystal
Clear states that are just that beyond
words but anyway getting back to the
idiot he was saying that you know some
people would say it's just the symptom
of a sickness and he's saying even if it
is the symptom of a sickness it's
still you know I mean so
what you know it's still just this
Indescribable Beauty and Perfection and
just Holiness you know and if it's drug
induced I mean again it's like so
what I mean I mean it's like drugs or

chemicals in our brains are making us see this stuff too it's you your brain is not designed for you to experience reality your brain is just designed to get you alive keep you alive long enough so that you can make babies and preferably in such a way that your babies live long enough to have babies of their own so I guess I guess I've explained enough of that for now I mean if you look through my blog well maybe not my blog um or the YouTube channel I'm sure you could find like at least something I've done specifically on the topic of psychedelics and maybe it's time for me

to do another one with maybe some
special guest who's also been a a
druggie or something in his
youth so we'll just move on to the next
question here this is from
yugao and yugao says hello can you
please explain if and how does deep
meditation help with pain and sickness
the other day I was in public transport
and I felt really sick like I was going
to puke probably got something from
little kids but then I focused on my
breath and felt joy and happiness and it
subsided well I think there's two ways
that deep meditation can help with pain
and sickness um one way is just if you
meditate a lot you're you're more

sensitive to like what's going on in
your body and you can sort of you've got
more uh like like balance in your system
you know like your energies are more
balanced and it just helps you not to
get sick to begin with that's my
experience like if you're doing regular
meditation you're less likely to catch
colds and so forth or just less likely
to get sick in general it still happens
even the Buddha got sick sometimes but
still I mean you can sort of any
psychosomatic effects that can make it
worse or even cause it outright
you know that is reduced and less likely
to happen and be a factor but also I

found that like with regard to nausea
and nausea is just really icky it's
worth worse than ordinary pain as far as
I'm concerned that if you're mindful of
it you realize that at least half of the
misery half of the ickiness of it at
least half is just you like have an
aversion for the nausea so if you can be
mindful of the discomfort the nausea the
pain whatever it is
then it just makes it a lot easier I
mean it's it can be difficult sometimes
if your mindfulness isn't very good
looking at nausea through a kind of
magnifying glass just might make you
feel even worse so it's It's Tricky but
if you can get through that and just be

okay with it just feel how it feels and
just accept the way it feels then
most of the the UN the ickiness of it is
just you like not wanting this just
Desiring it to
stop so if you can just accept it and
just experience it as it is then then
it's going to very much uh attenuate the
like the the suffering or just the
general ickiness of the
experience so I think I'll just move on
to the next question here and we're
getting down towards the end I'm happy
to say now not that I don't like
answering questions otherwise I wouldn't
be doing this but uh still I try to

avoid three-hour long Q&A

sessions so anyways this next question
is from

Mambo and Mambo says hello poo my

question is about the five Aggregates is

it only applicable to living creatures

or do they increase or reduce depending

on the complexity of a creature thing

matter what about planets galaxies and

universe do they have Aggregates or do

you consider them only matter if we are

a byproduct of this universe and are

conscious so is the universe conscious

does it have Karma as well well that's

an interesting question or a series of

questions see I got to make a space here

because he had the question mark and

then no space before the next question
which

uh kind of bothers me a little bit tell
you the truth so anyways the five

Aggregates is it only applicable to
living creatures well the five

Aggregates themselves would have to be
applicable only to living creatures not
necessarily living in a biological sense
but conscious

beings that have some kind of mentality
because four of the five condas are
mental you know you got just physicality
if if you even want to assume that the
physical matter is real then you have at
most one physical conduct one physical

aggregate so that part of it yeah the five condas would be applicable only to conscious sentient beings uh but they do increase or reduce depending on the complexity of the creature or thing of matter like um if you're in the formless Realms you don't have a physical body or anything resembling a physical body so you have at most four condas there um or yeah I mean definitely at most for condas um some creatures like plants they uh I mean they don't have perceptions as far as I know they don't have intentions they might still have a kind of feeling you know a kind of Consciousness kind of rudimentary Consciousness

according to the ancient text plants are called

achinga which means one faculty life all they have is a sense of touch they can't see or hear or taste or think but they can still feel in this vegetative sort of

manner so yeah so so plants or very primitive animals like a jellyfish they might not have the full five condas in fact I have this theory that even insects or like

arthropods they really don't have perception or volition they're just like little meat robots they still have might still still have feelings and

Consciousness but they they don't have any like thought process you know they don't just don't have a central nervous system the way we do they don't really have a brain the way we do you just got like two nerve cords with sort of ganglia every every once in a while so let's see planets galaxies and universes well if the planet has any kind of conscious life on it then the planet would have to include um the conscious life as part of its makeup I mean planet Earth has got Consciousness on it because we are part of planet Earth I mean we're not separate from planet Earth and so planet Earth at least has

got you know mental States mentality so
presumably with galaxies the entire
universe um do they have
Aggregates um yeah I mean
the I mean I guess I'd have to divide
this up from Orthodoxy in my own opinion
which is is pretty common on these C
cusines you know I have to give the
Orthodox position and also my own
personal belief when I don't accept the
Orthodox position which is the way it is
here I don't believe that physical
matter is real ultimately and uh I do
think that the entire universe is
conscious so even a hydrogen atom would
have this rudimentary little spark of

Consciousness to it even though a
hydrogen atom can't think or perceive
anything and it's just this primordial
little Elemental Speck of
Consciousness

so yeah I would say the universe is
conscious even an orthodox ter Vaden
would have to say that at least parts of
the universe are conscious because we
are parts of the universe sentient
beings are parts of the universe and uh
the universe itself doesn't have

Karma um you can say that the Universe
uh is caused by Karma that it is Karma
that generates this universe and it's
the the collective Karma of all the
beings in it that are creating this

universe and when it first starts before
there's any beings in it it's the beings
that are um

waiting mean they might know not know
that they're waiting but they are
essentially waiting to inhabit this
universe after it has reformed after it
was destroyed in a previous
cataclysm so

yeah I would say the universe is more
conscious than an orthodox Tera Boden
would

say and I'm not sure really if I've
answered Mambo's question
adequately but I think uh I'm not sure
how to answer it any better so I'm going

to move on to the next question which is from PSA and I think PSA is asking a joke question here and that's uh what do you think about what Joe Smith's wife is doing to him and I was just like five minutes before before I read this I was thinking that yeah it would be a kind of joke question just like what is your opinion of Bob Wilson because like the guy with the big toe up above you know somebody asked me a question about this guy with a big toe and it's like what is my opinion of him and a lot of like most of the time if it's somebody relatively obscure I have no idea it's an easy question to answer it's like I don't know I never heard of the guy and so I

think PSA has had a similar feeling
about um people with big toes and stuff
not that not that uh what was it white
ash Piper that asked that question here
let me scroll away the hell up
here still scrolling oh here we go yeah
yeah it was white ash Piper he asked me
about no I got to scroll back up again

Tom

Campbell yeah so a lot of the time
people ask me about someone who isn't
like a like

a high-profile

Buddhist or you know high-profile
spiritual teacher or something you know
they ask you he's some relatively

obscure philosopher that most people
never heard of there's a good chance
I've never heard of him either and same
with Joe Smith and his wife here it's
like uh I don't

know yeah so I think PSA was just kind
of making a joke because he's probably
never heard of a lot of these people
either sometimes I have heard of him and
then I maybe I can say something uh
useful or at least

entertaining but uh Tom Campbell and Joe
Smith or his wife Mrs Smith yeah I don't
know who they are so we'll just move on
to the last question the very last one
that was just asked right under the wire
it was just asked a matter of minutes

before I started doing this and that is
from

Toronto and Toronto

says well maybe he asked it earlier than
that but anyway Toronto n says does
taking precepts and refugees online line
still

count and uh that's yeah it's sort of a
timely question nowadays when a lot of
people are taking precepts and refugees
online like um when I was living alone
in the west sometimes I would um make
confession over the phone and that
counted you know I'd still like squat
down and uncover my my shoulder my right
shoulder and I'd be holding the phone

like this trying to put my hands
together and hold the phone up to my ear
at the same time and I'd be making
confession that way
you

me so yeah I think taking precepts and
refugees online counts especially if
it's sort of live you're doing it over
Skype or Zoom or over the phone or
something I mean if you're just texting
you know you're you're texting on a
message board or something it it might
not uh be as efficacious but really um
taking the precepts and the refuges from
somebody else like from a monk um it's
it's really not taking it from a monk I
mean in that way you're just having a

witness you're having like a a spiritual benefactor who is sort of endorsing you and helping you and witnessing what you're doing but I mean the main point is to really take the refuges and take the precepts and I tried to explain that to the Burmese who are kind of spiritual materialists and think that you're going to get Merit for taking the precepts even if you have no intention of keeping them just going through the ceremony is earning Merit and I'm trying to tell them I like you're better off not taking them officially and keeping them unofficially than taking them officially and then just not following them it's

sort of like I remember one time I was living way the heck out in the woods and there were these hillbilly types Burmese Hillbillies who came to visit me and I you know I'm trying to teach them this same thing it's like I gave this example from

I think from the New Testament where you got a father has two sons and the father tells the sons you got to go out and plow the fields today and the one son says I don't want to do that I'm not going to do it and then the second son says okay father I'll go plow the fields like a good boy but then the first kid who said I don't want to do it actually you know he has a change of heart or

something or he was just in a kind of a grouchy mood that morning he has has his coffee yet whatever he goes out and plows the field like his father told him to whereas the other one who said I'm going to plow the fields like a good boy he doesn't do it he just [_] off you know he goes and does naughty things or something and so I asked this burm hillbilly which son did better the one who said yes to his father and then didn't do it or the one who didn't say yes to his father but then wound up doing it anyway and it was just too abstract it was he just he was just it was like tilt and he just didn't get it

you know error lights lighting up he he
just blew his mind he just did not know
how to

answer but I mean that's the way it is I
mean obviously the the point in the in
the Bible is that the son who says no
but then goes ahead and obeys his father
you know eventually is the better son
than the one who says he's gonna obey
his father and then doesn't then it's
the same way with taking precepts and
refuges I mean you're better off not
taking them

and then following or just like not
officially taking the precepts and then
just keeping the precepts unofficially
then just going through the ceremony and

all that and then not keeping
them and so I mean doing it online it's
just I mean taking taking the precepts
in the refuges um you know it's just
kind of you're being witnessed and it's
you know kind of reinforces your resolve
to be doing it in front of a kind of
Spiritual Authority figure but really
the whole point of it is just you know
do it in your heart and just do it
conscientiously and it doesn't matter
what ceremonies are done or not done but
you can do it like online you know it's
better than nothing I
suppose like I said i' I've done
confession over the phone or over Skype

or

something so that's it that's the last question by golly and it's uh less than two and a half hours too and that was a lot of questions that was that was the proverbial boatload of questions and so if you got any more questions feel free to include them in the comments below if you have access to the Discord server you can ask them there if you have access to the Subscribe star you can ask them there and like And subscribe if you haven't done so already and be sure to check out the URL links including my now defunct neap punch. org website which might still be on the list but it's uh no longer alive everything that has a

beginning has an end and all that but
we're going to have a new website
probably with a different domain and a
different uh domain manager or something
and so check that all out and maybe uh
check out my books that are on the list
down there towards the bottom and be
happy

hello and welcome to episode 70 of
question and answer I'm your host P basa
and this is your
co-host glass of orange
juice we have another invisible co-host
lying on the floor over
there which is a dog who may
occasionally make snarfing noises or
some such so anyways we've got like a
very manageable list of questions not
the uh veritable Onslaught that we've
been having lately but it's uh you know
getting back down to more like the usual
number which I assume is because the
weather is getting more
wintry and some of my questioners my

audience may be coldblooded like
reptiles and so they're becoming torpid
in the cold weather and asking fewer
questions that is my hypothesis that I'm
working with
present so so anyways I suppose I should
just wade into this and the first
question is from Indian guy Alias
Trevor an Indian guy
says what was celibacy like for 30 years
how did you handle it and did it get
easier if it's too personal then I
understand if you don't answer I just
want some pointers to help live a more
pure Buddhist lifestyle in the clown
world that says it's normal to be a porn
addict and to spank it every day if

you're if you've answered this question already then don't feel like you need to answer because I'm on Q&A number five on your playlist so if you've answered a question on how to deal with sexual desire then don't worry about it I will get to it well I've probably talked about this General subject before although I don't think anyone's ever asked what was celibacy like for 30 years so well I'm going to answer it I've I answered the same questions uh sometimes especially like the karma question because karma is so difficult for Western like scientific materialistic objective thinking

westerners to really understand because
they we've been programmed as westerners
to believe in a utilitarian kind of
ethic which Buddhism doesn't really
follow so anyways what was it like to be
celibate for 30 years I mean it was not
easy um for most of my life I have been
hornier than the average guy I
think

um

so I mean there were times when I was a
monk especially you know up until my
early 40s I guess that uh I mean there
were times I'd just be climbing the
walls you know I just want to cry or how
like a dog or something because a monk
isn't even allowed to relieve the urge

by spanking the puppy I mean you can pet it a little bit but I mean if if if you have an orgasm deliberately that is a sesa offense it's the second most serious category offense after excommunication and it's really a pain in the neck it's six days and six nights of penance you have to go through this ceremony with at least 20 other monks there and sometimes that's hard to get them all together to do the cereem and it's just a pain in the neck and it's you just don't want to do that

so yeah it's it's like let's see how did I handle it and did it get easier well I

mean not eating very much and not
sleeping very much helps a little
bit um also I mean you're not going to
explode because up until I was in my
early 40s uh I'd have like a nocturnal
emission so to speak about once every
two weeks I think my record was three
and four nights when I was uh in Japan
for some reason I don't know why that
happened but um
really um it's it's hard to be celibate
if you're naturally a lustful
person
um just because I mean the urge just
doesn't go away is built into us and so
really the only way oh and I should
further add that it's Pleasant you know

that lust has a certain pleasure to it
so that it's it's even harder to to uh
break the Habit it's like pain is easier
to to break unpleasant habits than it is
to break Pleasant ones for what should
be an obvious reason so really the only
way to really successfully be celibate
is as soon as lustful thoughts arise you
just are like nope not going to go there
inappropriate and push it away just let
it

go because I mean it's you got to have
the

will to be celibate I mean being
celibate and then still being horny and
fantasizing about sex and so forth it's

uh it's kind of an inferior sort of
celibacy and it's not really going to be
permanent because you
you're I mean you still want to do it
you're just you know it's like the
desire not to do it is at at least
51% so that you're not doing it you know
you're not even playing with yourself
but
still um you you have to just have this
Faith where it's just nope not going to
go there not appropriate don't even
entertain the thought don't even think
about
it so
yeah and it's it's like especially if
you've been celibate for a long time

when you start getting up towards 50 you start thinking well if I'm ever going to do it again I'm gonna have to do it pretty soon because before very much longer I'm going to be too old to do it and in a way it's I guess it's appropriate that you know it was like I was well past my peak of of lustfulness when I finally dropped out of the monk Hood so I mean maybe it's sort of you know not optimal that when I am cohabiting with a woman again that I'm not as lustful as I was when I was living in a cave in Burma but I used to uh come up with these justifications for for indulging

in a little bit of lustfulness which really is is probably not the best way of going about it but I read in a a like a military strategy book I've got it back there on the on the bookcase the the indirect approach it's uh let's see strategy the indirect approach by I think it's BF Lidle Hart and he was saying that one of one of the reasons not the only reason but one reason why the the Germans Lost World War II is that Hitler was insisting upon not with drawing an inch that he wanted just this completely rigid defensive line that no no retreat was allowed and the author of this book that I read says that um sometimes a flexible Retreat is better

like a flexible defense is better than a rigid defense because especially if your opponent is stronger than you are which was starting to be the case towards the end of World War II especially on the Eastern

Front

um so you if you withdraw a little bit then you know you can wait for for the enemy to make a mistake and you can lure them into ambushes and so forth but um you know I was trying to use that kind of approach towards my own lustfulness and it it really doesn't work but I mean you have to be just 100% solid and wanting not to

be sexual

anymore that I mean any kind of latent

you know uncertainty is going to

interfere with that and then you have to

rely on the cold baths

and you know eating less and sleeping

less and so forth as kind of a makeshift

to hold the lustfulness at Bay as well

as

possible

so I guess I answered that question I

mean I was kind of all over the place

but I guess I answer it's sort of my

first question I'm still kind of getting

on track maybe I should have saved it

but I'm trying to I try to answer

questions in chronological order of the

order in which they were asked so I hope
I did okay and I I'll just move on to
the next question here this is from
popcorn

boxing and popcorn boxing says I
understand you're a close friend of
Brian Rue do you think Buddhism and
national socialism could operate
together well yeah I
mean you any kind of political party I
mean unless they're like marxists that
are just opposed to religion in general
but I mean any kind of politics any kind
of religion can
somehow you know work
together so you know like the Catholic

church and the the Italian fascists were kind of working together there were well that I can't remember what it was called but the Nazis had Christian groups that were tolerated at least that because the Christian groups were endorsing you know National Socialist ideals and so forth um so

yeah I mean Buddhism and uh Japanese imperialism during World War II they they got along

together and but I mean you'd have to modify one or the other you'd have to modify national socialism into a pacifist movement which probably wouldn't work very well just you know no violence or you'd have to make Buddhism

more okay with violence which is
generally how it has worked in the past
when Buddhism and politics get together
I mean you you just have to face reality
and say that you know there have to be
armies and so forth there has to be
occasional

violence so yeah it would have to be one
way or the other like Julius Iola uh he
just praised Buddhism to the skies as an
appropriate spiritual system for what he
considered to be you know the the elite
you know like the the people that are
ruling the
ruling the the government or whatever in
a more or less fascistic

manner but uh yeah he he wasn't really much of a pacifist either you know he would play up the the fact that the Buddha is considered traditionally to have been a member of the warrior cast and so forth but um I mean Buddhism is just

uncompromisingly pacifistic or at least ear early Buddhism was and then gradually it starts becoming more War like even terado Buddhism like in Sri Lanka during the the centuries long Warfare with the Hindu tamls you know there's been a lot of you know militant terraa Buddhism going on down there so yeah that's that's the only way you could really combine them together is to

modify one or the other so that they're in Conformity with the principles of the other so I think I'll just move on to the next question from popcorn boxing which is did you ever smoke smoke and then he's got a cigarette emoji as a monk and I never really smoked cigarettes I think the only cigarette that I can remember smoking was when I was in fourth grade my stepbrother Chucky and I skipped school one day and went to this park where they had these big trains um you know like old steam engines and stuff and we hid in one of these trains and smoked cigarettes that we swipe from my stepdad from his father

and uh I didn't even inhale

so I mean but in Burma they do have

cigars and uh there were a few times I

would uh I was just wanting to smoke

something maybe I was kind of stressed

out wanting something to help me relax

or something and uh a few times I asked

for um cigars like home handrolled

Burmese Village cigars and one of my

main supporters at one of the places I

lived rolled cigars professionally so

she'd always give me a handful of them

if I ever

asked

um I remember one time I was I was

having a bad year it was just like a toe

stubbing aggravating year just the

entire year was like that and one time I
thought maybe maybe smoking a cigar
would help so I asked for a a fancy like
a a big kind of white cigar it's rolled
in some kind of leaf that isn't a
tobacco leaf I'd seen them
around um back during British times they
were really a big deal like uh the road
to manderlay mentions them you know the
the poem by rard Kipling so I asked for
one of those and I got it and I'm lying
on my back in the in the cave on my
wooden pallet bed smoking this thing and
I get about maybe halfway through with
it and I'm starting to feel like relaxed
and kind of my body is at at ease you

know and I'm thinking this isn't bad
maybe I could smoke these a little more
often or something and then by the time
I got about 2third of the way through
with this cigar all of a sudden I just
got hit with this wave of nausea partly
because I was also breathing the stale
smoke inside this cave it wasn't it
wasn't like a very spacious cave it
wasn't like Carl's Bad Caverns or
anything and I just went outside and
crashed on this it was like a platform
like a it's called a zat in Burmese it's
just like this thatched roof with a
platform it's up on posts and I just
crashed out there in the middle of the
night just wanting to either feel better

or die and I didn't really care which
man it was awful I I've really never
been into tobacco so I would have to
admit that um I actually smoked more
cannabis than tobacco when I was a monk
although I didn't smoke vast quantities
of

either so I think I'll just move on to
the next question from covac and sead
zida and cak andad Zid says how are we
to read the Mula maaka Kaka I was
reading nagara pay homage to the Buddha
and the first chapter which has only 14
verses let's see and the first was only
however it seems he is just saying
things without explaining much do I have

to read on further or the whole thing to
understand what he meant at the
beginning or is it just too technical to
be understood by just diving in well
this is a maamaa question so I got to
put on The maamaa Fez

helps okay so I think there might be
some bad grammar in here how are we to
read the Mula Kaka I was reading nagar
to pay homage to the Buddha and the
first chapter which only has 14 verses
however it seems he is just saying
things without explaining much so so it
must be in the first chapter not and the
first
chapter

so okay so I mean the first chapter of

the mul jamaka karaka is just like the
invocation like it's just this tradition
in Buddhist literature after you get
past the uh like the the
titica

stratum the totic of Spas once you start
getting into you know like non-canonical
Buddhist literature like like late
ancient times early Medieval Times
there's often like an invocation at the
beginning sometimes another sort of
invocation or what exoc I don't know
what it would be called at the
end um so yeah is the the wisi Maga has
like an invocation of the beginning too
if I'm if I'm remember correctly so

really it's just sort of devot
that just the invocation at the
beginning is just like this almost like
a formality it's just devotional
Buddhism and then he gets into the meat
of the mulaka karaka after that when he
starts you know discussing the question
of whether a cause and its effect are
the same or different that kind of thing
so yeah you have to read on further you
have to read the whole book I mean how
are we to read the mul jamaka Kaka well
I mean you just it's kind of a weird
question to ask you just sit down and
and read it and understand it as well as
you
can I mean I don't I don't know how else

to answer that

question I mean that's how I did it I

just lay on my left side in a cave and

read the book and then you just

understand it as well as you can some

parts maybe you can't understand

but oh well you know maybe if you think

about it or you subsequently read the

book again and and then later you you

can understand it but but uh I mean you

just read it and understand it as well

as you can I guess I

mean I I don't know how else to answer

that question so I'll just move on to

the next question from CAC andad

Zid in which he

says the as

sahri prita Sutra the Perfection of

wisdom in 8,000 lines is considered to

be the earliest text of the prag

paramita sutras dating it to around 100

BC I read that the diamond sutras and

heart sutras are contracted teachings

from it so essential to later teachings

in Mahayana however it says in this

text even Nirvana I say is like a

magical illusion is like a dream how

much more so anything else what do you

think it's claiming about Nirvana here

if it's also Just an Illusion and what

place does this put nirvana in the

entire understanding of d as seen from

the view of this

text well I mean I've discussed this quite a lot like well um I have read the uh Tibetan book of the great Liberation that also says that you know Nirvana is just a concept and really if you're thinking about Nirvana it is just a concept you know if if you got a label on it it's just this thing that isn't Nirvana so I mean really they're just stressing what I've been saying pretty much all along and that is that Nirvana is off the scale anything you say about it is invalid any belief you have about it is invalid so if you start thinking about Nirvana I mean it's just going to be a

magical illusion it's going to be like a
dream it's not going to be really
Nirvana and real Nirvana I mean
ultimately it doesn't have a
name it's not an it it's off the scale
it's just not in samsara you have no
access to it that is samsaric you have
no samsar access to Nirvana at all
trying to understand intellectually it's
not GNA it's not going to work the best
you can hope for trying to understand
Nirvana intellectually is that it's like
a [__] that just breaks your intellect
at least momentarily and allows silence
to finally maybe get a glimmer of
it so let's see what do I think it's
claiming about Nirvana here I mean

nirvana in quotes and I mean the word
Nirvana and the concept of Nirvana is
illusory I mean it's just delusional
because anything we can think is
delusional anything we can put a label
on is
delusional so it's just in a way it's in
it's in an off-hand manner just
emphasizing Nirvana is completely off
the scale and anything you can possibly
think about it is going to be
invalid so I think I'll just move on to
the next question this is from Jeffrey
so I think we're done with majama
questions for the time
[Music]

being so I don't want to waste the juju
of my Fez answering other kinds of
questions so this is this next question
is from Jeffrey and Jeffrey says I find
meditation very hard due to the chatter
of my monkey brain I found a Chinese
herbal recipe to smooth the chi and make
meditation easier have you tried
something similar in are there herbs
Foods or substances that would counter
this

um well I've never really the only like
chemical attempt I made to improve my
meditation is that many years ago I knew
somebody that was taking Prozac they had
they got like cancer or something they
were given Prozac to help them with

their anxiety and they didn't take all of it and so they just offer the rest of it to me um because I had mentioned that um I read that Prozac Stills the hyperactivity of the frontal loes of your brain and that's kind of where the meditative or really the anti-meditative chatter is happening you know it's like you do your like chattery thinking with the frontal loes of your brain at least um a large part of it and so I tried taking proac just experimentally to see if it would help with my meditation and really I noticed really nothing other it it made me a little sleepier

it didn't noticeably help with my
meditation

um so the only let's

see see are there herbs Foods or

substances that would counter this well

I mean in yoga you've got the whole idea

of satvic food satvic Foods you know um

which would be

like grains fruits nuts and dairy

products that that is supposedly satvic

which presumably would help you in

meditation and you'd want to avoid

rajasic foods like meat or spicy food

and then you'd want to avoid tamasic

food um which is like mushrooms or maybe

blue cheese you know anything kind of

stale or moldy or mushy I

guess but uh yeah I

mean just uh eating less

sleeping less I mean that can kind of

help but um yeah I think you just have

to like muscle through

it so I think I'm just gonna move on to

the next question here I apolog I

apologize to Jeffrey if my answer was

not a very good

one because I really never came across

anything that that really helped my

meditation by taking

it so the next question is from Toronto

and Toronto says can you attend the

meetings of a s that has been corrupted

by leftism or is it best to practice

alone in that case well it depends on how badly the S has been corrupted I mean if they're they keep their opinions to themselves um when giving talks and so forth that it hasn't been incorporated into the practice or you know into into like what they're giving discourses on on that sort of thing then yeah I I don't see any problem with that although I mean if they're just mixing leftism in with the Dharma and not differentiating the two then you might be better off seeking your dhama elsewhere so I mean it's like if you're getting more benefit than harm from attending this SAA attending these meetings then I it wouldn't hurt at

least it would help more than it would hurt but I mean if if there's more more harm than good from attending them I mean just if your mind is you know more agitated and less at peace and so forth after attending these meetings just because of all the you know whatever going on that they're talking about that isn't really DH even though they probably don't know

this so yeah it just depends on the the effect that it has on you two different people might be able to attend the same corrupted leftist sa one of them will get benefit and the other one won't just because of the effect that it has on

their

mind

so yeah I mean it would be best to avoid
SAS that have been corrupted by leftism
or really any kind of um any kind of
more or less anti- darcic politics or
ideology because really I mean leftism
and and dhama in some ways they're just
exact

opposites you know like victim culture
is just anti- darcic you know in

Dharma then I mean when you are unhappy
that's your choice really it's it's like
immoral to be unhappy because you are
choosing to suffer even though most
people don't realize this because it's
just so driven by habits and they just

are ignorant of the the truth about the
cause of
suffering and so I mean
in on the left I mean they want to blame
somebody you know back in the old days
of you know Marxism 1.0 it was the bisi
you know the capitalist class you know
but now it's essentially straight white
men you know white people are the enemy
Whitey is the enemy and if if people
that aren't white are suffering it's
somehow White's fault and that's just
the opposite of dhama and then the whole
Karma thing you know it's like you're
you're you're living the existence that
is the result of your own Karma I mean

that's that's victim blaming too um I just read first half of an article written by a Jewish author saying that uh Buddhism is anti-Semitic by its very nature because if you think that the Holocaust was that the people who died or suffered in the Holocaust were just um you know experiencing the fruition of their own karma that's anti-semitic because you're blaming the Jews for the Holocaust and um so I mean this this author was actually saying that um the whole idea of Karma and Buddhism has to be rethought by postmodern westerners um so I mean that's that's the kind of leftist stuff you can come across so yeah I mean you're just going

to have to decide for yourself whether you're getting more benefit than harm or vice versa and then decide from there so I'll just move on to the next question from Toronto

n which is is downloading Dharma books for free that one could one would typically have to pay to access a violation of the five precepts and I think technically it would depend on whether it is illegal or not like when I was a monk I downloaded a few dhab books for free off the internet and it was on like dhama sites where you know you can get like an e version of like bod works or

whatever and

uh yeah I don't think it was

illegal but uh I mean if it's if it's

like a black market kind of a thing then

yeah that's it's you're getting into

sort of ambiguous

borderline theft I guess I mean in the

Buddhist time when they're making the

rules there was no copyright

theft so um

or or whatever it is when you download a

book that you know you normally would

have to pay for but for some reason you

can just download them for free U I

don't know if that's copyright theft or

what it is but I mean if it's considered

to be illegal then yeah you should

probably avoid it but if

it's if it's like a a d site like a

high-profile dama site you know it's not

like some Russian site or some site

that's in the camoro islands or

something

um yeah but I mean if you've got doubts

don't do

it it's the only way you can get the

book then maybe but um yeah for a monk

it's it's uh thinner ice than for a lay

person because if a monk commits theft

you know that's serious enough that he

could get arrested for it then he's

excommunicated even if he doesn't get

arrested for it whereas a lay person you

know

it's I don't know it's it's it just more

ambivalent for a lay person I

guess so I think uh I'm I'm really don't

know exactly how to answer that

question it's it's like a it's like a

complex legal question it seems to me

but I think so long as it's legal it

should be okay because stealing is

illegal for the most

part

so yeah just in the spirit of things

might be taking what is not

given but I mean the the the website

that's has it for offer is giving it

so yeah it's yeah I think I think an

easy rule of thumb would just be you

know the question is it legal or
illegal so I'll just move on to the next
question here this is from Lord Baker
and Lord Baker says in the west the
church and other quasi religious
companies have a near Monopoly on
weddings and funerals in the East do the
Buddhist temples are also largely
participate in these events if so two
follow-up questions
below and so I guess
um I guess these next two questions are
the are the questions what would a
Buddhist wedding entail and what is the
monastics involvement okay so I I'll get
up towards the first part of this

question anyway and that is in terab

Buddhism monks are strictly forbidden to participate in weddings like the actual Wedding part like the wedding reception after the deed is done then yeah monk can participate in that but the actual like conducting the wedding ceremony that would be another sesa offense which is you know one level below excommunication it's a grave offense and so in a terraa Buddhist country like Burma monks do not participate in wedding ser ceremonies generally what happens is the couple will go to the Village head man sign some papers and that's essentially the the wedding and then they'll throw a big

wedding reception invite the whole
village invite the The Village
monks if you know if they high-profile
enough they can in invite some famous
monk from the city
somewhere and then you know they make
offerings to the monks you know
sometimes it's really cute the bride and
groom will you know both beholding the
offering that they're offering to the
monk you know as you know they're
they're in us now you know they're
earning Merit together and then the monk
will bless their their marriage after
the deed is already done that's
generally how it works in Burma I assume

it would work similarly in uh Thailand
I'm not so sure about Sri Lanka because
Sri Lanka notoriously deviates radically
wildly from the rules of monastic
discipline in certain
respects

so in in Mahayana Buddhism you've got
Mahayana priests doing doing weddings
mainly because they don't bother
following the ancient rules of monastic
discipline
anymore

so yeah so in with regard to a Buddhist
wedding it's purely secular it's pretty
much signing papers you know in like a
government office or in front of the
village headman or whatever and then

afterwards you have the reception after you're technically married and then the monks bless you and you make offerings to the monks and you know everyone has a party but with regard to a Buddhist funeral and what is the monastics involvement yeah there's nothing in the rules of monastic discipline from preventing monks from um participating in funerals and I've attended a few funerals um and and participated in them so I mean it sit not against the rules for a monk to just attend a weddding so long as as he's not participating in in the

ceremony you know he's not conducting it
or

anything but with regard to a funeral I
mean they can conduct funerals I suppose
and mainly the way it works is the monks
will

chant and they will give a sermon
generally on impermanence because it's
it's a golden opportunity to preach
about

impermanence when somebody has just died
and then sometimes um they'll do the lay
people will do like a water pouring
ceremony where they will share merits
with the with the
deceased um so yeah monks can

participate generally it's the Monk's

participation in a funeral is chanting
and and giving a discourse you know like
the lead monk the senior monk there or
the most famous one or whatever will
give a discourse on impermanence and
maybe conduct a little ceremony for
sharing merits with the
deceased so and think let's move on to
the next question this is from Liber
Lam and Liber Lam says what is the karma
of Doom scrolling and could we describe
this as an intensification of karma like
a greater intimacy between the action
and fruit serving an antagonistic
function to a Clarity that might
decouple the two and I don't fully

understand this question it's too too intellectual for me I think I mean I can kind of understand it but I don't claim to fully understand like this the last part of that question like a greater intimacy between the action and fruit serving an antagonistic function to a Clarity that might decouple the two um well I mean this question was kind of difficult for me even before I got to the second part of it just because I had was unfamiliar with the meaning of of Doom scrolling so I asked what Doom scrolling means and like three different people three or four different people answered and they gave three or four different

answers some people were are apparently of the opinion that Doom scrolling is just reading bad news you know you're just sort of blackpilled kind of um just scrolling through blackpilled stuff I guess bad news other people saying it can be anything you just if you just sit there for two hours just scrolling like on your phone or on your computer through social media posts or whatever that's Doom scrolling although I'm not exactly sure where the Doom comes in if you're just like scrolling through memes you know it's like humor or something so anyway I asked and Liber Lam himself defined it for me and since he's the one

who asked the question I'll be going with his definition here and Libra Lam says that Doom scrolling is when you're watching short social media posts in sequence that are curated based on what an algorithm determines you will react to so you waste an exorbitant amount of time stuck in a hedonic Loop of watching them

um so um it's he says it's you're scrolling through social media posts that it's it's like an echo chamber you know it's like the the algorithm algorithm sort of calculates what you're likely to like and just shows you that and so you're just getting like dopamine hits scrolling through this stuff that's

confirmation bias or or whatever you know you're just seeing what what you want to see and you're getting little dopamine hits for doing it for for two hours maybe in maybe while sitting on the toilet who

knows

so what is the karma of it I assume the karma of it wouldn't be all that different from like playing with yourself or um I don't know was watching TV or something um I mean there's the confirmation bias thing that uh I guess wouldn't be so so prevalent if all you're doing is playing with yourself but um I don't think it would be an

intensification of karma it's definitely making Karma any anything that you do that is a volitional Act is making Karma and you're going for like instant gratification but there's lots of ways you can get instant gratification is eating something eating an ice cream cone is instant gratification playing with yourself so long as you know you enjoy the whole act and not just the culmination would be you know instant I mean instant gratification so I don't think it would be an intensification of karma in fact in a way you you get people can get used to anything so even if you're Doom

scrolling and just going through like
you know how the world is is just
completely [—] and you know the
world's coming to an end we're in the
college Yuga you know blah blah blah um
just by scrolling through that you just
sort of get used to it you get
acclimated to it and then it just sort
of becomes

dull and I guess you know just scrolling
and scrolling and scrolling I mean you
just get used to it it's just it's just
a habit so that I mean the karma
wouldn't so much be intensified as just
sort of muted a
bit um but still I mean any kind of

volitional Act is Karma and the only way
to intensify karma is to intensify the
volition because karma is volition karma
is will like schopenhauer's will with a
capital

W so whatever intensifies will or
volition or

urge is an intensification of

karma um I mean if you just wallow in it
it's not so much intensifying the karma
but you see it could serve as an antigon
antagonistic function to a Clarity that
might decouple the two yeah I mean if
you're just wallowing in it the way
you're you're like wallowing in food or
wallowing in masturbation or wallowing
in whatever it is that you're getting

your instant gratification from then I
mean you're not going to be mindful of
what you're doing and you're not going
to be able to decouple the two I'm not
sure what oh action and fruit yeah
that's the two that you're supposed to
decouple action and
fruit

so yeah K in we

Paka so have I answered this question
that is my
question

um yeah I mean if you're just UNM
mindfully wallowing in something
samsaric that doesn't necessarily
intensify the karma it just makes it um

and you just get more lost in it but it could be just sort of dull Karma you're being lost in but the only thing that would intensify Karma would be an intensification of the volition or the will that is driving your behavior so maybe if it becomes habit forming and you just have to do it then that could intensify the karma you know if it becomes really habit forming so that you just feel compelled to spend hours every day then that could be considered an intensification of karma I suppose but I'll just move on to the next question here and this is from gamma spectrol and Gamma spectrol says what's your opinion on internet trolling I am a

ruthless troll but I keep it comedic and if someone takes it well and even better gives it back I give them props for having a sense of humor and not being a sensitive baby I Target people that clearly take themselves too seriously and especially those that are using victim narratives to prop up their moral identity such as commies I'm always laughing as I do it but sometimes it feels a little naughty well by golly I have to admit I do some internet trolling myself and usually what relatively little trolling I do is in the the comment sections of Breitbart

articles and uh I mean you you come
across some uh easily trollable people
there because they tend to sort of
normies a lot of them are really not too
bright um then You' got the trolls that
come in that are trolling and then I
troll the trolls
sometimes um and it
whether an act is ethical or unethical
whether it's good karma or Bad Karma
depends on your intention depends on
your volition your will as I was
mentioning earlier just uh a minute or
two ago so it depends largely on your
volition I mean if you really are trying
to embarrass or humiliate someone
there's there's definitely going to be

some unskillful karma in
that but I mean there's also I can't
remember the Japanese word for it but
there's in Zen it's called Dharma battle
and I always like that idea you read
like Zen Coons some Zen Coan
collections like the hean
Roku it consists largely of Dharma
battles between two
monks you know it's like one monk will
say you know say a word of Zen and then
the other monk has to say something and
you know it's it's sort of like a
challenge and you can't just recite
something from a text because that's not
Zen you know Zen has to be

spontaneous or you know a monk will just
you know put one rock on top of another
rock and say what do you say to that and
you know it's just these weird things or
you know why did bodhi Dharma come from
the West you know you just ask this
question just out of the
blue

so um you know that in a way is kind of
trolling but it's also like a Dharma
battle you know there it's like Zen
Buddhism apparently at least in the past
has relied heavily on this as a way of
um you know keeping people keeping their
uh their wits about them you know
keeping them on their
toes so but I mean if you're doing that

to someone who doesn't want to be on his
toes then you yeah I mean you could just
be uh being mean or
something but um yeah I
mean anything that you do with meta in
your heart is bound to be
okay but if you're trying to you know if
you just despise somebody and you're
know trying to to like make them
uncomfortable or unhappy then yeah
there's there's definitely going to be a
negative like uh Bad Karma element to it
so

I'm not exactly sure what to tell you
here let's see I'll just read the
question again here what's your opinion

on internet trolling well like I said I
I do a little bit of it myself I'm a
ruthless troll but I keep it comedic and
if someone takes it well or even better
gives it back I give them props for
having a sense of humor yeah that in a
way that's sort of like Dharma battle
except more secular version of it I
Target people that cly take themselves
too seriously and especially those that
are using victim narratives to prop up
their moral identity such as commies
um probably in a case like that I mean
kind of the best way to troll them in a
darmic manner would be sort of like the
Socratic method where you you just sort
of like point out to them you know you

might ask them questions or if they've already said enough you can just point out to them that what they're saying you know it's it just it's irrational you know it doesn't you know it's self-contradictory or it's just untrue or something like that maybe out more out of compassion for the other people who read that person's writing than that person himself because generally you're not going to change the mind of the person that you're trolling although it has happened

before so I think I'll just move on to the next question I'm I'm sorry I couldn't really give a golden answer to

that but uh in a way

it's sometimes it feels a little naughty

I think sometimes it is a little naughty

but to exist is to

transgress

so transgression is the spice of

life I mean life would be pretty

boring if everyone was just nice to each

other all the time I mean that's one

reason why the world isn't people being

nice to each other all the time it's

it's a major reason it's just it'd be so

boring so I think I'll just move on next

question here this is from I really have

never been able to figure out how to

answer how to pronounce this harim cthul

HR ym KT hu L harim cthul maybe it's

something from

Lovecraft anyways harim

says I would be very interested in

hearing your stories about drug

trips yeah

um I could I could give a few I suppose

I mean I probably already told these qu

told these these little stories like

one time I was in

college maybe 19 years old and I

attended this party and I took like two

hits of acid before attending this party

and I was

telling this these friends of mine it's

like you know when I take this stuff it

just drowns out anything else I could

take any amount of anything and it's it
just doesn't have any effect on me so
this one wise guy friend of mine says I
got just a thing come with me so he
takes me back to the keg and he bring he
holds out this beer bong I'd never even
seen a beer bong

before and it's it's pretty simple you
know you just kind of bend down and you
put the two you know the end of the the
hose in your mouth and he pours a beer
on the top and it just shoots down your
throat

so I I assume the position and put the
thing in my mouth and it just starts
shooting down my throat and it just
keeps shooting and shooting until

finally I look up and they're just
pouring beer after after beer into this
funnel and so finally I just I just have
to push the thing away and I walk away
it was just like beer shot out of my
mouth it was it was like I was
pressurized I was so full of
beer and I mean just strange things
about that night like there was a big
fire it was like this gazebo with this
this fire in the in this fireplace and
somebody's going to hand me some wood
like a big chunk of log or something I
just hold out my hand because you you
lose all sense of of how strong you are
or how heavy other things are anything

like that anyways one of the main reasons why I'm bringing this up is that a friend of mine another friend of mine not the wise guy who with a beer bong he wanted to go to my house because I live relatively nearby because he wanted to snort some cocaine and he offered me some but I thought you know it'll just be wasted you know it just it won't have any effect but anyway I was willing to go home with him go to my house with him to let him do whatever he wanted to do and I remember as we were pulling into the driveway I hope my dad isn't here and I look up his red van was not in the par in not in the driveway so I was kind of relieved and then like three seconds

later I look up and there's his van and
he did not have time to come around us
in the driveway and park there and so
I'm not sure if that van is really there
or not but the thing is even though I
was under the

influence I still was able to engage in
some kind of rational

thought so I just got out of the car and
started walking towards that red van

kind of waving my hands out in front of
me like this so that you know if it was
really there I'd bump into it and if it
wasn't really there I'd just walk

through it and that's what happened I
just walked right into the side of it

and it just poofed out of existence and
I'm like great my dad isn't here so then
I go to the to the door and I look in
and there's my dad sitting in his chair
like watching TV and then I I look again
he's not there and it turned out he
wasn't there at

all and it's that kind of thing I mean
i' I've had religious experiences almost
every time I've taken uh like a
psychedelic

drug and that night I was having more
religious experience like later on that
night I was just walking home in the the
line on the side of the road was this
white line it was just like this
shimmering purple line and I'm just

following this shimmering purple line
back up and I was just thinking even
though I was like 19 years old I was
thinking I have lived a full life I've
experienced pretty much everything there
is to experience I I could just lie down
here by the side of the road and stop
breathing and just die you know not
because I was suicidal or anything it
was just I just felt like I just
experienced it all you know I lived a
full life already
ready you I'd be if I was a dog I'd be
an extremely old dog at that point but
of course um I still capable of rational
thought and realize that you can't die

from holding your breath because as soon as you pass out you just automatically start breathing again so I mean really I could give because I've had a religious experiences almost every time I've taken psychedelics you know it might be best to talk about that but it's really hard to describe a mystical experience like William James talks about um mystical experiences in his classic book The varieties of religious experience which I would recommend to anybody that wants to understand religion in general just the religious mind and he says that there are two aspects of a mystical experience one is

that the experiencer of the mystical
experience has no doubt whatsoever that
it is more real than his ordinary w
State of Consciousness and two that his
mystical state will have no con
vincing persuasive effect on anybody
else and this very hard to explain a
mystical experience because I mean you
in a way you're transcending the
explainable but I can give uh at least
one more drug story might as well and it
was I was like maybe 17 at the time I
think it was a senior in high school
junior or senior in high school and this
rascally friend of
mine no not any of the friends that I've

already mentioned I had this different
rascally friend who called me up on the
phone and said hey man you want to try
canabidol like this stuff isn't really
canav andol but it's like canav andol so
I was willing to try just about anything
aside from like homosexuality or
narcotics in those

days so I drove into town to my rascally
friend's house and it was the daughter
of my family doctor was there and she
got her hands on some of Daddy's

Pharmaceuticals

apparently and there was some kind of
asthma medicine that we were supposed to
burn and inhale the fumes but she was
mixing it with water and handing it out

to people to
drink and so you know I dutifully drank
my cup of water that was kind of like
Brown mud puddle water it tasted kind of
like mud puddle water and for quite a
while I was experiencing No Effects
whatsoever until it was maybe half an
hour or more later somebody gave me some
of those little animal cookies that have
like the pink or white frosting in the
little candy specks all over them so
that the like the frosting pretty much
obscure as what kind of animal it's
supposed to be except for the camel you
can always tell the camel because of the
hump anyway they gave me some of those

and I started chewing them and it was maybe two or three minutes later I realized that I was just sitting there chewing a mouthful of perfectly dry cookie crumbs my mouth was completely dry and so I had to get a glass of water or something just to wash the cookie crumbs down my throat and then I started feeling like nauseous like I just felt icky so I told my Ras friend I'm not really having any effect from this other than it's making me feel icky I think I'm just going to go home and he said yeah I feel kind of the same so I started driving home and I noticed that I I look up and see a stop sign and then i' look

away and look there again and it would be like a hitchhiker standing there going like this and then I look again it' be a stop sign again and I was starting to get worried it's like if I can just hallucinate stuff like this I mean I'm going to see a green light when it's really red and and just run a red light or something I mean this is this is dangerous but of course being a goofy teenager I just drove home which was like a 15 mile trip but I had driven that road so many times in so many different states of Consciousness that it was sort of a base brain like the spinal cord was getting me home and on

the way home at least four times I saw a rabbit run across the road in front of the car it was always from right to left I'd never seen rabbits running across the road like that before and so I'm thinking man I got just got to get home I got to get home alive so I get home and I park my my pickup truck in front of the garage and I get out and on the garage door there are two gigantic woolly bear caterpillars I mean they're like this long you know they're like a foot and a half long and I could see every individual tough of hair on those giant caterpillars as well as I could see anything else my eyes are a little

blurry but I could see them as clearly
as I could see the garage door itself as
clearly as I could see anything and but
at that point I was starting to think
that maybe this stuff was strick nine or
something because I've heard that strict
nine gets you high before it kills
you and I just wanted to lie down you
know it's it's another one of those
cases where I either want to feel better
or die and I don't really care which as
long as I don't stay feeling icky like
this so I just went and and lay down on
my bed and after a little while I
started feeling a little better so so I
decided to get up and I walk into the

kitchen and I decided to make a peanut butter sandwich so I get out the bread and for some reason I spread peanut butter on both slices of bread and then the next thing I know poof I'm lying on my back in bed again and I'm lying there thinking did I really get up and go into the kitchen and spread peanut butter on bread or did I just hallucinate the whole thing CU I was still awake I mean I wasn't I wasn't like unconscious and like dreaming at least I wasn't asleep sleep dreaming so still I'm still capable of some some semblance of rational thought so I thought well I'll just get up go into the kitchen and see if the bread is there on the counter

because that would indicate that I put
it there so I I get up and go into the
kitchen and there's bread on the counter
but there's no peanut butter on it and
then I just start walking through the
house just looking at everything you
know just is this real am I really doing
this you know I get go into the living
room I'm looking around all of a sudden
poof I'm lying on my back in bed again
and and I just thought to hell with this
I'm just stay I'm just staying in bed
but I mean one of the things you learn
from like Vivid hallucinations like that
they were drug induced I mean it's like
you can't really trust your senses I

mean even if you're not on drugs still I mean that's no guarantee that what you're experiencing is reality and even science can tell you that what you're experiencing is not reality I mean it's related to reality somehow according to scientism

but you know it's it's not what you're experiencing is not real essentially you know it's just you your your brain is symbolizing sensory data that you're getting through your senses and turning it into this but really the reality out there is very

different and I mean just things that happen like that one one time it wasn't drugs at all I mean I've had experiences

like this that weren't drug induced
where one time I was living at this big
school monastery near Mandalay and had
to go out at night to pee you know no
no indoor plumbing there and I was
walking back and I saw this dog I used
to feed this dog I called it puppy L and
it was just it had mange and was like
completely covered with fleas but my
heart went out to the little bastard it
was tough puppy L was a tough dog and uh
I saw her lying there I could see you
know which way the head was and you know
how she was lying you know I knew which
dog it was I could see her well enough
to know which dog and then you get a I

got a little closer and all of a sudden
I realized that it wasn't a dog at all
it was just a pile of leaves that one of
the novices hadn't moved away after
sweeping it up he just left this pile of
leaves in the in the courtyard and just
left it there so it's like your your
mind you know it's like your imagination
really is is a major portion of what you
perceive of reality and U that's one
effect that that drugs taking certain
like Psych elic drugs in addition to
just the Mind expanding mystical aspect
which is pretty much beyond words
there's also this you know um it's it's
sort of it's helping you to understand
that what you're seeing is not

necessarily

real and um yeah that's that's had a significant effect on on my life and how I look at things another another not I don't know if I develop it into a total story but I have done a few iasa ceremonies and one common factor of all of my iasa experiences or yah which is essentially the same stuff is you just feel the pain of the universe just gushing through your heart it's like some people they're they sensitive heart oriented people they can just feel the suffering of people around them and that's one reason why they are just driven to do humanitarian Aid or you

know counsel troubled teenagers or work
at a homeless shelter or a battered
woman's shelter or that kind of thing
you know they're just driven by it
because it hurts to have other people
suffering around
them and on the other hand I'm more head
oriented and uh I don't feel that way
very often where you just I mean I I
have a certain amount of empathy where
you can feel what people near you are
feeling but just having the the pain of
the world troubling me all the time is
generally you know it doesn't it doesn't
happen all that much but you take take
that uh
iasa and it's just like I mean it just

hits you it's just a very heart oriented kind of a drug I figured at first before I took it it'd be a head trip you know like mushrooms or LSD or something but now it's visceral it just blows you wide open and so it gave me some insight into what it's like to be just a really sensitive heart oriented person because I was my heart was just wide open for like 24 hours especially after the first time I took

it but I don't want to give an entire video on drug experiences because we've been at it for over an hour now so I'm just going to move on to the next question here this is from Athena's

sigil and Athena sigil says my question
is about how animals are treated in
Buddhist countries versus Western I have
a suspicion that it's better here in
general yeah better in the West in
general uh yeah

um one thing about Burma I mean that's
the the one country I can speak about
with the most Authority because I lived
there for more than 20 years just a
second here I got some kind of little
popup thing on my screen okay is that um
the Burmese are people people they're
people oriented people
and I think it was uh what was
tho who said that it seems to be a law
that one cannot have a deep affinity for

both man and
nature and Western people tend to be
more nature oriented you know they might
not like the human race all that much I
mean there's a lot of people who are
people people but you're going to find
more people in the west who aren't
people people that that their their deep
Affinity is with with nature which would
include animals and I'm I'm kind of that
way for most of my life I have liked
dogs and trees more than I have liked my
fellow man which is one reason why I
became a hermit living in a forest in
tropical
Asia but uh I mean you do have I mean

Burmese Buddhists who are they're kind of spiritual materialists so they won't they might not want to kill mainly because they don't want to get Bad Karma but animals are still kind of an it you know they don't have the same um the same compassion for an animal that they would have for another human and the Japanese especially so they used to surprise me like um I used to work on Japanese ships and of course you got fishermen who aren't going to be compassionate towards you know the life forms that they are catching but I remember one time it really stands out in my mind we we got a a snailfish came up on in this

on this long liner I was working on and it was still alive and I put it in a holding tank and it a snailfish this species of snailfish it's like bright pink and its its pelvic fins have developed into these feelers under its chin so it's like this and it's got two eyes that are sort of like like uh brushed aluminum discs and it's just this cool bizarre looking fish just kind of motoring around with its tentacles going you know bright pink and so this Japanese fisherman walks by and I said hey look at that and he just looks at it and he had a big Gaff hook in his hand he just like gaffs it and then hands me

the skewered fish he just assumed that I
wanted wanted him to get it for me I'll
Just sh him how cool it looked but they
don't

care and I mean you read about Japanese
experiments on animals and stuff it's
they just don't have the same kind of
compassion the same feeling of like
animal rights that Western people
have

so I mean like in India You' got like
scy dogs and scy monkeys and scy cows
all over the place and people don't want
to hurt them you know they might even
kind of worship them a little bit at
least the the monkeys the Hanuman
monkeys and the cows but uh still um the

dogs there just scy mangy dogs just
eating garbage just on the verge of
starvation all the time it's it's not
good so yeah I mean I think it's uh in
Burma probably other like Eastern
countries they will show um as proof
that Americans are insane they'll show
like like um dog grooming salons you
know where you got the little Pikes
that's getting its hair all groomed and
everything and you know they're they're
dogs in America are going to salons when
you know most people in other countries
you know even the you know even the
people don't go to
salons so it's just yeah the Burmese are

in general I mean you are going to find Asians who love animals you know they love dogs or they love cats but Asian uh Burmese villagers you know most of them have a dog but the main purpose of the dog is to eat garbage you know to clean up the baby poop in the yard and to bark at strangers that's pretty much that's pretty much the main purpose of them and they're disposable the dog gets sick you might give it some kind of herbal medicine you're not going to take it to a vet you know you give it some kind of herbal medicine if it doesn't get better well you just get another dog so yeah animals in general are treated

better in the West

so the next question is from creel I think that's how to spell it or how to pronounce

it man I'm having troubles with words lately anyways creel says why do you think so many near-death experiences report meeting Jesus and in some cases angels with wings even What place would Jesus have in the Buddhist cosmology what would Buddha think about him according to you would he be considered a Dava a Brahma or what about angels and guardian angels are they recognized in Buddhist cosmology are they dvas brahmas Etc thank you okay well I guess uh

there's more than one question

here

so maybe I should separate

these okay so what do I think about so

many experiences like near-death

experiences that were where the people

say that they saw Jesus or Angels um

it's because they expect to see Jesus

and Angels probably they're Christians

and so they expect to see this when they

have you know when they die they think

they're in heaven they're going to see

Jesus and Angels or some Saints or

saintly people um and this reminds me of

the Tibetan Book of the Dead which talks

about something similar to near-death

experiences you know the standard

stereotypical near-death experience the
toet in Book of the Dead you know
there's considerable overlap between
these

and one thing that the person is told in
the Tibetan Book of the Dead is no
matter what you see in this BAU realm
you know you're going to see relatives
you're going to see the Buddha maybe
you're going to see like Monsters you're
going to see demons and angels or Gods
you know you're going to see all this
stuff and you got to keep reminding
yourself this is a creation of my own
mind that you're seeing pretty much like
dream stuff and that would be

essentially what happens with a near-death experience is you know you see what you expect to see if you're a Christian you're going to you're going to see Jesus or Christian stuff anyway something that's not in complete conflict with Christianity or what deep in your heart you expect the afterlife to be like and a Buddhist is probably not going to see Jesus unless he's heard about Jesus and deep down he's got some ambivalent feelings about Jesus and thinks maybe Christianity might really be right or something so what place would Jesus have in the Buddhist cosmology well I mean Jesus as a man would be a human being

the Buddha would probably acknowledge
that Jesus had some kind of realization
that he had psychic
powers um I mean from the Buddhist point
of view he would not be
enlightened because you know he he cried
and got angry and and that sort of thing
but um let's see what place would Jesus
have in the Buddhist cosmology after
Jesus died probably he he'd enter some
Heaven realm presumably you know he was
very Advanced spiritually maybe not
fully enlightened but still very
Advanced spiritually that uh yeah he'd
probably wind up in in some Heaven
realm so The Bu to think about him I

think I already answered that that you know he would acknowledge that Jesus was a wise man that he had psychic powers I mean if that was even relevant to mention and uh you know he was he was getting close even if he uh wasn't fully enlightened so I think I'll just move on to this this next part of the question about angels and guardian angels are they recognized in Buddhist cosmology are they Davis brahmas Etc thank you with regard to Guardian Angels definitely the Burmese believe in the co- Salat which is you know the personal protecting

DEA

and uh when you're when you're sending

meta you know like when the monk is
leading the people you know repeat what
I say you know they do a lot of that
repeat what I say stuff and you know
they're just blessing you know they
start with you know themselves and then
they start then they do the co- salut
and then you know they do the a salut
which is the the daa protecting the
house and then they do like the
neighborhood salut and the what the M
salut which is the the the the daa who's
protecting the city and you know they
they just go up all the way to the you
know locata you know the the world um
Guardian Dava called locan nat lord of

the

world so yeah they'd be Davis um with
regard to just angels in general yeah
just be Davis or

brahmas because uh I mean really

Christianity is a polytheistic religion

because I mean not only do they have the
Trinity which is sort of ambivalent but
they believe in angels which are superum
beings that they're essentially Immortal
you know they have greater Powers than

we do so I mean I'm not exactly sure

why Christianity is so vehemently

monotheistic when really they

acknowledge the existence of these

superhuman Immortal beings that aren't

God but are Servants of God and it's

like maybe the fact that they are
Servants of God and just makes them not
small G Gods but something else called
an angel but really I mean it's it's the
same from a Buddhist point of
view I mean from a Buddhist point of
view they're not they're not even really
Immortal that there's anything that has
a beginning has an
end and see nobody lives
forever so I think I answered this
little cluster of questions from creel
so I think I'm going to move on to the
next question question which is from
pranav and pranav says your opinion on
Dr Babas sahib

edar here in India he is considered a
bodh SATA and I too think he is a bodh
SATA well I know very little about um
Baba sahib edar that uh I know enough
about him to know that he started uh a
movement in India where um Untouchables
were being converted to
Buddhism and I have also read that he
did this more for political reasons than
for Spiritual reasons that he wasn't so
much I mean this is just other people's
take and I don't know enough about him
to know if this is true or not but I
have read that I mean he was doing it
not so much out of faith in Buddhism but
as a way of helping The
Untouchables to you know get a better

position so by converting to Buddhism they were just removing themselves from the whole Hindu cast system which made them Untouchables you know they were below

sudras so um it does seem plausible to me at least that it was largely a political move rather than a spiritual one but again I really don't know that much about him and uh the whole concept of bodh satas is kind of a an anachronism I mean it's it's not really a terab Buddhist idea I mean there is the buddhis which means something different from a mahayan bodhisattva buddhis SATA is just someone

who is destined to become a Buddha and it's hard to say whether um Baba sahib edar is destined to become a Buddha or not I mean how could we possibly know so I think I'll just move on to the next question here this is from Gringo and Gringo says thoughts on occultism question mark

well occultism is a very broad field um my father was pretty much of an occultist you know he referred to all the psychic stuff and and like uh ghosts you what would be considered the Paranormal to be the occult and I do know a few um people who consider themselves to be occultists I've done a few videos with

occultists and um at least one of them
is a considers himself to be sort of a
neoplatonist pagan

um so I'm not exactly sure how
neoplatonist paganism and occultism you
know exactly what the relationship is
between the two I don't think that Neo
neoplatonism you know is entirely ultic
if that's a word and certainly occultism
isn't limited to paganism or or
platonism but occultism for the most
part um most of it is is is worldly in
some sort you know it's dealing with
worldly stuff you know you're doing the
the Spells or channeling the spirits or
or doing the psychic stuff um for

worldly purposes not for the purpose of transcending the world there are occultists I I assume that there are maybe a significant minority of occultists who really are trying to use like you know ancient ph ancient Greek Phil ophy like neoplatonism or something as a way of transcending you know this human predicament but for the most part it's uh it's worldly stuff sort of like witchcraft kind of stuff or channeling that kind of a

thing like my father I mean he was just interested in the unknown he was just exploring the unknown like within his own mind just doing all sorts of um like dream Communications you know like

entering other people's dreams and um he was a uh leader of a a coven of board housewife witches for a while and he did lots of stuff like that hypnotism would also sort of be a cultish even though it does have a you know it is acknowledged by science you know like Stanford University has a hypnosis lab but still I mean I think hypnosis would be considered a part of a cultism also maybe that oldfashioned Alchemy would be a kind of a UL ISM I think ultis like ult literally means something like hidden so probably any exploration of Hidden Truths or hidden realities would be called occultism although

mostly it's uh It's associated with uh
like psychic powers or witchcraft or or
that sort of
thing but um yeah I'm personally I don't
consider myself to be an occultist I
don't identify as an occultist so I'm
really not an authority on it I think
this just such a broad field that
there's so much that could be said about
it that um you know sort of like
Hinduism you know it's it's just sort of
this broad
spectrum so we'll just move on to the
next question I guess sorry Gringo for
not answering your question more
completely or at more at length although
the question was very short it's only

three three words

here so we'll just move on to White Ash

Piper and white ash Piper says hello poo

basa I watched two of your archaic

Buddhism talks and you told a story

about the Buddha being offered a young

lady for marriage and Buddha said get

away from me you sack

of sack of piic and he's trying to say

piss get away from me you sack of piss

and dung I wouldn't touch you with my

foot and you said that this beautiful

young lady hated him for the rest of her

life but her parents instantly became

enlightened so regarding Karma did the

Buddha create Bad Karma by causing pain

to another being or did the means
justify the end well for starters I
would point out that this is for me this
is kind of a an interesting
anthropological case study because the
the story has been Twisted in a certain
direction and um I don't think white ash
Piper deliberately Twisted this although
you know if you know Donald Trump became
fully enlightened Buddha and he did
something like this you'd expect it to
get twisted in this same direction
because I am sure that even if Donald
Trump became a fully fully
enlightened that some leftists would
hate him even worse than
now so

actually um he didn't say get away from me you sack of piss and dung I wouldn't touch you with my foot he just said what is this full of urine and excrement I would not want to touch it even with my foot so he wasn't directing his comment directly at her I mean he wasn't like insulting her to her face I mean he probably wasn't looking at her you know he was probably looking at the parents and just making a point that you know a human body is full of urine and excrement and it just has no appeal to him and uh also the parents I mean it is true that the beautiful young lady hated him for the rest of her life according

to the the commentaries but her parents
did not in becom en lighten they just
became soapas they became Aras you know
they got they got
converted by just the shock value of
this but they didn't instantly become
enlightened so I mean this this the
story did get kind of warped a little
bit and uh this whole story is not
necessarily um like objective
history that I mean in the in the uh in
the suta it's at the beginning of the
mandasa of the AA waga where it starts
with the Buddha saying you know what is
this full of urine and excrement I would
not want to touch it even with my foot
um and also he mentions you know having

having seen the three daughters of Mara
you know he was not even slightly moved
toward

sensuality so um or at least that became
it was like T let's see what was it t AA
which is like

craving like uh insatiable

insatiableness and lust are the three
daughters of Mara but I mean this could
be like the origin of the three

daughters of Mara because he's not
saying that I saw the three daughters of
Mara it's just I saw craving

insatiability and lust and I was not
moved to to sensuality you know it could
just be that that's how the legend arose

of the three daughters of Mara because the gandia suut is a very ancient so I mean it doesn't have the story of the Brahman trying to present his beautiful daughter to the Buddha as a wife you know the whole story is about you know what happened to the parents and how the daughter hated the Buddha and all that I mean that's that's all commentarial stuff that probably isn't nearly as ancient as you know just the relatively tur first verse of the mandia sua but um even assuming that you know the the commentary is true that the story really happened not the way white ash Piper presented it but you know in a somewhat mitigated

form

um yeah let's just assume for the sake of argument that the story is essentially true so then white ash Piper says so regarding Karma did the Buddha create Bad Karma by causing pain to another being well the answer is of course no because an enlightened being creates zero Karma no matter what he does

he is no longer motivated by what a Christian would call

self-will you know he no longer has self-will he he no longer has um bition or will at

all so yeah he did not create any kind

of karma bad or good and did the means justify the end presumably so that an enlightened being would do what is appropriate one would assume that even though one person might take a hit you know two people um you know they they get immense benefit from it and maybe the one person that took a hit needed sort of the needed to come down a peg because she was very you know narcissistic or something I don't know but I mean the main point of this question here is did the Buddha create Bad Karma by causing pain to another being and no he did not because he an enlightened being does not create Karma at

all so we'll just move on to the next
question here this is from Joe
and this is an easy
one Joe do says have you seen Napoleon
yet if so what are your thoughts and
Napoleon I assume is a movie about
Napoleon and no I haven't seen it so I
don't have any thoughts about it I did
hear that it sucks but I don't know I
don't know what the critics say about it
I I never even saw the like the what do
you call it the teaser the part of the
be part there the preview never even saw
that so I'll just move on to joo's next
question here which is taking it in a
different direction have you had

meditation as profound as being high on drugs and the answer to that is yes I have had meditation that is more profound than anything I experienced on drugs um yeah there were there were a few times in my career as a cave dwelling

meditator where I would experience something in meditation just this Crystal

Clarity that I mean I had no doubt that that just five minutes of that even 30 seconds of that was well worth 10 or 15 years of just struggling and floundering and just sweating and getting malaria and eating shitty food and sleeping on the floor I mean it was it was all well

worth

it so I mean drugs are more reliable I

mean you can take a tab of LSD

you know assuming that it's legal

wherever you are this is not medical

advice or legal advice but I mean you're

pretty reliable what you're going to

experience but with meditation in order

to get something in order to get to like

you know this profound Crystal

Clarity then you may have to meditate

your ass off for years and years and

even then you might not experience

it but the answer the answer to that

question is yes I have had meditation as

profound as being high on drugs fact it

was more

profound so I'll just move on to the next question here and this is from Indiana dharm and Indiana dhama says what are the karmic consequences of offering worship to the gods something like burning incense or offering wine or milk so that a deity will in assist with pragmatic issues like physical health Financial issues ETC I have also heard of Dharma protecting deities among the Mahayana Buddhists is there a terot version of these deities so I guess this is two questions I got to separate these okay so the first one is what are the karmic consequences of offering worship to the gods well it depends on

your volition I mean again karma is
volition karma is Will so if you've got
wholesome volition while doing it you're
going to get wholesome results and if
you have UNH wholesome bution while
doing it you can have UNH wholesome
results and I don't know I've seen some
pretty strange offerings to the gods
during my life like I was in Burma once
and

um I there was this annat Shrine there
was maybe I should back up a little bit
when I first moved to this area it was
at the the northern edge of Alo kaan
National Park and these people there
were very rustic you know they were not

sophisticated Slicker City Slickers by
any stretch of the
imagination and near the village
there was this Grove of trees that
hadn't been cut down yet and that was
kind of strange in and of itself it was
noticeable it's like wow there's a Grove
it's like old growth forest right there
why didn't they cut that down like they
cut around cut down everything around it
and I realized by going over there that
there was a natat shrine there it was it
was essentially a sacred grove like you
hear about or you read about like an
ancient Greece how they would have
sacred Groves that were dedicated to
some deity or other they had one there

and it was uh I think she was called a
which means the great mother and uh I
took the liberty of opening up the the
shrine it was sort of like a rabbit
hutch and you could open the door and
there was this little statue of a
goddess wielding like a a machete and
crouching next to her was a
tiger so anyways most people didn't go
to that n Shrine that was sort of sacred
I guess probably maybe because I was a
monk it was okay that I opened the door
but but um like every once maybe once a
year they'd have a a Napo you know it
was like a festival in honor of a MAG
and they'd take the the statues out and

they' put it on this different Shrine it would had this platform and that's where people would make their offerings and one time it wasn't during the the uh the festival it was just I would stop there to take my bowl out of its bag before I went into the village for alms and there was a woman there who I mean the the statues weren't there or anything it was just sort of this empty

Shrine and she went down to the creek and oh no she picked some leaves from a tree you know like little Twigs from the the the sacred grove she grabbed a clay pot that was that was there conveniently at The Shrine went down to the creek filled up the the pot with water came

back up put the leaves in the pot of water offered it there and then listed off this long laundry list of stuff that she wanted from this deity in exchange for giving them giving the deity a handful of leaves you know she wanted her family to be healthy she wanted her kid to pass his exams she wanted you know so and so to get better from whatever sickness they had she just had this long list and it was like man she just essentially trying to Swindle this deity you know for a handful of leaves she's trying to get all this stuff in return

and um yeah that's I don't think that's

so good I mean if it's
something if you have a vested interest
or like an ulterior motive where you
offer something to the Gods in order to
get something back then it's really not
a pure offering that I think I mean the
deities don't give a [—] about a
handful of leaves is they want if they
want anything from us at all I mean they
just appreciate a certain amount of
respect maybe a little love you know
it's like I I look at offerings of the
god sort of like if if your cat goes out
and kills a lizard and then brings it to
you just kind of offers you this this
dead lizard I mean you have no need for
a dead lizard you weren't sitting there

particularly wanting a dead lizard but
the fact that that cat was thinking of
you and out of some kind of love offers
you this dead lizard I mean it makes you
like the cat more you know it's like the
cat was you know it was like being
thoughtful it was thinking of me and
giving me this dead lizard you know and
that's kind of the way I would
imagine like the lower gods are towards
us I mean if if you Revere them without
expecting anything in return they're
going to appreciate that and be nice to
you more than if you're offering a
handful of leaves or or killing a
chicken and then listing off this

laundry list of stuff you want in
return I mean that's just sort of like
some sort of commercial transaction or
something and it's one that's
essentially swindling the
deity

so yeah I mean it's like having respect
for your superiors is a good thing and
the deities and I assume they're out
there you know if if this universe can't
produce anything higher than us then
this universe is got is I don't know
it's not not all that great but I assume
that this universe is infinite and
there's going to be an infinite number
of beings that are more advanced than we
are and so having respect for them some

of them may have been human at one time
I mean that's fine and Buddhism endorses
that I mean reflecting upon the dvas is
one of the the 40 standard modes of
meditation listed off in the Wii

Maga so yeah I mean you're better off
just doing it out of respect and and if
they decide to help you in some way as a
result of that that's fine but doing it
in order to get something out of it is
not really a pure offering in my opinion
so we'll just move on to the next

question from Indiana Dharma Indiana

Dharma and he says I have also heard of
Dharma protecting deities among the
Mahayana Buddhists is there a teren

version of these

deities um yeah most of the the Dharma

protecting deities are in the Mahayana

Pantheon you know like prya parito or

manri people like or deities like that

but um I would I mean even the god Saka

Saka king of Gods you know in a way he's

he's uh he's a devout Buddhist according

to Buddhist

cosmology and so yeah he'd do what he

could and he was a powerful deity you

know he is the patron deity of uh of the

Indo Arians you know the viic brahans

and also uh he's like king of you know

the primordial Pantheon of gods before

um they started thinking of people like

Brahma Brahma Realms and so

forth

so yeah I guess Saka king of Gods would be the main Dharma protecting deity um in Teravāda Buddhism although I'm sure there are some relatively obscure ones maybe the the Lokanātha that I mentioned earlier might help dharma in this world and I assume there are dhamma oriented deities that do what they can but um just the very thought that you're gonna have a god of something is uh it seems kind of naive to me you know like the ancient Romans had the god of sneezing and the god of dreams and the god of of this and that and I mean really I mean what kind of existence would that be if

you're a God if your whole duty is just
like like supervising people
sneezing so yeah I think that different
different uh higher beings might have
different proclivities
propensities and that uh but but I don't
think that it's like their job to to uh
to be the god of
that but uh yeah I assume in terot of
Buddhism especially in later
developments of it there have got to be
um deities who are helping to protect
the dhama in the world but uh it's not
really
canonical other than Saka king of Gods
who revered the Buddha and you know did
what he could so I'm just going to move

on to the next question this is from
om and om says why was seac banned on
YouTube well I don't know the whole
story he just told me that uh he got
kicked out of YouTube I don't think he
got a full explanation even but I think
it was for something to do with uh hate
groups so uh I think he mentioned in
some video he may have uploaded in the
past possibly years past you know there
was mention of some hate
group and uh somebody didn't like that
and flagged it and YouTube just took
down his his entire account because
YouTube is is really not a free speech
platform so yeah I don't think he did

anything really

wild so I'll just move on to 's next question and that is how and why you went to Japan as a terot monk well I went up going to Japan like three times as a monk I never really planned on going to Japan although I do have a lot of Japanese karma in this life I think there's a good chance I may have been Japanese in a previous existence I've always kind of been impressed by the Japanese and uh I wound up working on Japanese ships as a as a lay person before I became a monk and then um the first time I went to Japan aside from being on Japanese ships was when I first went to Asia as a

junior monk I've been a monk for less than two years and uh one of the senior monks of the tong Pulu tradition came to America and I went back back to Asia with him and I was advised to go to Asia by other monks cuz the monastery was in California the board of directors were nutty the place was just in chaos and so the the Burmese monks there some of the senior monks advised me just go to Burma do monk stuff in Burma until things get better here and then you can come back and I'm thinking maybe two and a half years you know I'll be in Burma two or three years and it wound up being like 23

years but uh cuz things just didn't get better at the moment they just got worse so uh the first time I was just on my way to Burma we stopped for I think it was three weeks in Japan we weren't staying in a monastery we were just staying in various like Apartments of uh lay people you know Burmese immigrants in Japan and Burmese immigrants in Japan tend not to uh be very wealthy so we were staying in little apartments and uh yeah like even a a doctor in Burma if he went to Japan he could not be a doctor in Japan he'd have to like go through medical school all over again or at least pass exams all over again in

Japanese so that was the first first thing I just stayed in Japan for a few weeks and then we moved on to Thailand and then to India and then back to Thailand and finally to Burma the second time I went to Japan um I just happened to meet this old monk he was a retired surgeon he became a monk after he retired from being a surgeon and uh he was old enough that he remembered the Japanese from the Japanese Occupation of Burma during World War II he was a kid at the time but he said that the Japanese treated him well and he learned some Japanese he's had some affinity for Japan and so he became like a a

missionary in Japan and he started a little Terra Monastery in Japan and he came back to Burma and he was just just chomping in the bit to get me to come to Japan with him because he wanted some non-asian you know American monk who was like a strictly practicing one to sort of show off to the Japanese say look look at this American Monk and I didn't want to go and I'm asking like my the Abbot of my Monastery like my main teacher you know should I go and he's saying I give you permission to go and I like I I really don't want permission I just want to know if I ought to go at all and everyone's like urging me to go to Japan and I didn't want to go to

Japan that time I just wanted to stay in
Burma and do my monk thing and uh I
wound up spending uh almost an entire
rain retreat in Japan and the thing is
it was it was really weird I went with
two aam Maha

pidas who are I mean that's like one of
the highest ecclesiastical titles in
Burma for a month and AA Maha Panda
that's about as high as it gets if you
want to get higher than that then the
government has to like invent a custom
title for you maybe toptica D would be a
higher title than aam Maha Panda but in
the in the party of Burmese monks and
also two nuns we went there two of them

were egam Maha pandas which is you know
the rank of General in in the the
Burmese ecclesiastical hierarchy and we
all got kicked out right before the end
of The reigns
retreat by this woman who was
essentially the the the leader of this
Buddhist group that invited us to this
Monastery you know they own the property
and everything and she just did not like
how Burmese people were flocking to the
monastery Japanese people not so much
and that she just didn't want it turning
into a Burmese Monastery just like a
Burmese Cultural Center so she was
opposed to the idea of us renewing our
our 90-day Visas so that we could finish

the Wasa there she just wanted us out
which included two egam Maha pidas which
as I say it's like one of the highest
ecclesiastical

ranks and then finally the third time I
went to Japan was just it was just a
layover for a few days just uh in
between

planes I just the most memorable thing
about that trip was uh somebody I was
staying in this room and the the
previous occupant had like this nudie
calendar up on the wall

it was very hard not to notice the nudy
calendar on the wall as a celibate and
frustrated

monk so

anyways um I'll just move on to the next

question here and this is from

disin and tazin says peace be upon you

oh wow I'll start over T says peace be

upon you poasa and everyone listening I

need your advice I feel like my urge to

study and read Theology and other

important stuff is not a positive mental

state I feel like I don't have enough

time and I am nervous when I feel like

I'm not doing enough effort which is

almost always how to turn a Strife for

gnosis into a positive mental state well

that's kind of an interesting

predicament so it's like a hunger for

higher knowledge is sort of getting in

his way and uh I mean it can be like the last major obstacle for a sincere spiritual Seeker it's like they just obsess on getting wiser until finally that's like the last major obstacle that they've got and that's the last thing they have to let go of but um yeah I'm not I don't know if I can fully wrap my head around this question like I can't like

fully I can't fully understand it um it's like the urge to study and read Theology and other important stuff is somehow I mean he wants to do it because it's positive but somehow it's it's not being positive or not

completely

positive and uh I mean just the the

hunger to read stuff I mean I can

understand

that but uh I mean really you're going

to have to get to the point where um

just words and books aren't going to get

you there I mean the best the best

effect that words and books can have is

to just challenge your point of view

especially after you get to a certain

point you know get up to like

intermediate level then the best thing

you can read would be like Zen Coons or

something read the hean

Roku or the mumon KH or something and I

mean in a way you'll be sort of reading

and trying to sort of cure yourself of
reading at the same time um because I
mean you read you read enough and
eventually you've pretty much read
everything I mean even if you haven't
read every book there is on the subject
you've pretty much been exposed to all
the major ideas I mean that's one reason
why I'm really not interested in
watching dhama videos on YouTube um is
just I mean I've heard it all
before so um

and also I've just kind of come upon my
own understanding and I really don't
need um other people to interfere with
it other than I mean sometimes you can

think you understand something and then
you get challenged and then you then you
realize well maybe I didn't understand
it as well as I thought I
did but um yeah it's I can sympathize
with I I used to know this trumpet
player uh from uh St
Louis he was this black guy guy who
lived in Bali in
Indonesia and he was a musician a
talented musician but he said he he did
not like listening to other people's
music because he didn't want it to
contaminate his own individual
style and I can kind of relate to that
and also I've I've even had the idea
that in a way having a teacher is

cheating because you should like work it out for yourself but I do admit that having a teacher can be very helpful

so you see he wants to study and read but and I mean eventually I mean you're going to have to get to the point where I mean you've heard it all before or any minor variations are not going to really be substantial they're not really going to be

important so you might want to just uh kind of ration it ration your time you know keep it down to like you know a certain amount of time per day one or two hours hours per day

maybe um or again read Zen Coons which
will help to uh just still the intellect
through the intellect you using the
intellect to sort of overcome the
intellect or just you know just limit
yourself to the most advanced stuff
maybe I'm not sure I'm not exactly sure
where tazin is at in his spiritual
progress or his philos opical progress
so I can't give like really specific
advice in that
regard but uh turn a Strife agnosis into
a positive mental state well in a way it
is I mean if it's it's sort of a mixed
bag you know you want you want higher
knowledge so that's good that's positive
and it I mean sometimes I mean you have

to just have to have this practically an obsession like that reminds me of this story um Paul low said this story uh years ago about how there was this young man who heard that there was like a A very wise hermit who lived in the forest and he wanted he wanted Enlightenment he wanted higher wisdom so he goes to this hermit and he says please teach me and so the hermit you know kind of looks him over and says all right come with me and he T leads him down to this stream and then he just grabs this guy and it's throws him down and just holds his head under the water and the the young guy is like struggling he's trying to get his

trying to breathe you know he's trying
to get loose he can't do it everything's
starting to go black and then finally
The Hermit just you know pulls his head
out of the water and then after the the
guy you know you know the hysteria has
kind of died down and he's breathing
relatively normally again the hermit
says to him when you want higher wisdom
as badly as you wanted to breathe just
now then you'll be ready for me to teach
you and sometimes that's what it takes
it's just like that's it's like this
Burning Desire like you have to have it
um I mean it sounds awful the way I just
explained it but I mean sometimes it's
it's just this need that you have to

have some kind of Spiritual Awakening or
spiritual progress and and sometimes
that's what it

takes but again I don't know how this is
going to help dis because I really don't
know where he's at

but uh I guess I babbled enough that
maybe I gave him some kind of food for
thought that he could uh process into a
nugget of advice or

something huh I mean I can I can
sympathize with just sort of wanting to
read and study I mean I've I've gone
through definite long phases of
that like uh when I first became a
novice the my Abbot was telling me you

know you shouldn't read so much because I was you know as a beginner I mean obviously you want to at least read up on the basic suas and so forth but he was saying you know even that is is too much I mean you're never going to find Enlightenment in a book unless it's some statement that just completely challenges your point of view and just knocks it to the floor so that you know it just leaves this Clarity behind but the words themselves are not going to get you enlightened it's just the the words attacking other ideas that just leave silence behind kind of a thing so I guess I'll just move on to the very last question and Fred asked

this question just a few hours ago just right under the wire here Fred says is an arahant the embodiment of choiceless awareness and I guess that's one way you could put it choiceless awareness if choice is is like a volitional act presumably it is then then yeah an arant would have choiceless awareness and uh I guess it's j Krishna mury that talks a lot about choiceless awareness and how that is sort of that is essentially an enlightened point of view so yeah I mean there's lots of ways you can describe an arant and none of them will be completely valid but I guess an arant being the embodiment of

choiceless awareness is as good as any
far as I know so uh let's go with yeah
the answer to that question is
yeah and that's it so if you have any
more questions that's what I'm here for
and just leave them in the comments
below and like the video if you haven't
already and subscribe if you haven't
already and check out the URL links if
you haven't already and be
happy

hello and welcome to question and answer
number 71 I think I your host po basa
I'm pretty
sure and we have got the most questions
that has ever been asked on a Q&A it's
it's another veritable zombie apocalypse
of questions which reminds me that in a
recent
Q&A I was asked what do I do if I become
too famous
so that people are just overwhelming me
with questions and I don't remember what
my answer was or even if I answered that
question but the answer is I'm just
going to have to reduce the number of
questions that each person can ask so

now we're going down to

four four questions four shall be the

number of the

count

so um if you've got more than four

questions uh well maybe maybe if it's a

slow week but apparently my theory about

how many of my viewers are

poikilothermic or cold blooded and

become dormant or or torpid during the

cold weather apparently that theory

needs some revision because uh it's like

middle of December and we've got like 59

questions which is a lot of questions

and here I am just blathering away

instead of answering questions which

reminds me when I used to go for alms

rounds sometimes um there'd be like more than a hundred people there could be like 80 to 100 people in certain areas all lined up wanting to offer food and I just had that one bowl that that bowl right back there up on the bookcase there and uh I just had to reduce the amount of food that each person could offer it was down to at some places it was just one spoon each so of course you had like these wise guy little old ladies who would bring like this big serving spoon from from home or they'd like be balancing a banana or something on this little spoon but really I just need to start

answering questions and the first question is from SE vac and sead Zid and seac sead zida says what is the relationship between nagar and postmodernism I know postmodernism has completely different goals where it is used to to analyze power differentials and dismiss everything else whereas nagara seems to be more concerned with maybe how an enlightened being would see the world from their eyes but I bring this up because nagar reaches the same conclusions and makes many of the same arguments as them for example claiming all knowledge is based on axiomatic claims that are based on inference that we can't be sure of there being no such

thing as ultimate truth reaching
conclusion

like there is no birth no death no
Liberation no Purity or impurity Etc due
to emptiness his ideas of relativism and
many other

examples maybe postmodernists are
realizing the conventional truth they've
always held can't hold up to scrutiny
causing them to short circuit and take
down everything with

them so I guess the main question here
is the very very top here what is the
relationship between nagar and
postmodernism and because this is a
nagar question it is thereby a maama

question and so I put on The majamaa Fez
sometimes I think that maybe he
asks maamaa questions just to see me
wear this bitching

Fez this is really a nice Fez I got to
admit if you if you're in the market for
a fez Fez orama is the way to
go so anyway the relationship between
nagar and postmodernism

well narina is mainly saying that um no
no positive assertion is ultimately
valid and

postmodernism kind of says that but
really that what they're trying to say
as far as I can understand postmodernism
is that truth is just a cultural
construct it's a social construct but it

seems to me that in order to make that claim you have to assume that cultural constructs have reality that there is like this underlying reality um that gives reality to cultural constructs because if everything is a cultural construct then cultural construct itself would be a cultural construct but somehow the the idea of cultural constructs are exempt from this relativism that postmodernism prefers or or whatever it is that postmodernists do about about cultural constructs so yeah I mean they're sort of coming to

similar conclusions at a superficial level but I mean the whole philosophy underlying it is radically different I think um Nagarjuna is just trying to make sense of dependent co arising and how in even in early text the Buddha is saying that is is one extreme isn't is another extreme and the Buddha follows the middle path which is dependent core Rising which goes in between is and isn't so in a way it's trying to explain emptiness whereas postmodernism um it's my understanding it started with like literary and art criticism that it was just sort of like the new criticism that that was how um postmodernism got its

foot in the door in

Academia um but then it got taken over
by politics especially like Marxist
politics um but then of course they
don't apply this relativity of Truth to
Marxism

itself so in a way postmodernism and as
in its political manifestation is truth
is arbitrary so whoever's in power gets
to decide what truth is we want to be in
power we want to decide what truth is to
further our own goals and that's very
different from what narina is
is

saying I mean mainly he's discussing
just the invalidity of assertions as a

way of just cutting through samsara
whereas postmodernism is just sort of
Lost in samsara sort of like
existentialism was lost in s like
existentialism really didn't have a way
out just it was just sort of a bleak
philosophical you know postor War I this
bleakness was was driving it it seems
like and postmodernism is somewhat
similar although it came a little
later so maybe it was the the bleakness
of of leftists when they realized that
communist countries were [__] holes you
know that communism was actually being
tried and it was
failing so yeah there are differences I
mean there's superficial resemblances

But ultimately um yeah I think deeper
down there are definitely differences
with uh the most of the profundity going
over to nagar's

side so considering that we got so many
questions I think I'll just wait into
seac and sead zina's next question which
is not a maama question so I take off

The

Fez so his next question is sometimes if
I meditate for too long for too many
days in a row for the rest of the day
after I get an extreme sense of Doom and
Gloom feeling nothing being safe or
secure and all of it eventually being
annihilated it causes me to want to stop

meditating for months and just escape to
cartoons or other media so I won't have
to face this horrible reality I don't
know how to make this stop and have too
much fear to continue on when this
occurs any advice on how to prevent this
from happening or having more courage if
it is unavoidable well

if you were in a meditation interview
with a teacher from the mahasi method a
teacher from mahasi tradition teaching
the mahasi method he' just say note it
just like these feelings of Doom and
Gloom arise note them mindfully you know
you feel that nothing is safe or secure
note it let it go and I mean really I
mean it's like a baptism by fire to some

degree I can relate to this kind of to
some degree like being mindful of this
sort of

unhappiness

unpleasantness if you've got really good
mindfulness then you can sort of

denature it in a way you're just

completely detaching yourself from it

you're observing it as just a

phenomenon but if you're just kind of

not extremely mindful then it's just

you're seeing the the ickiness through a

magnifying glass which makes it even

more

icky so it could be something along

these lines that is causing Co actually

and SE Z not to have trouble with his
meditation um but really to make it stop
I mean that is really not the goal of
meditation especially if you're
practicing mindfulness meditation then
you just observe whatever phenoma
arise and uh note it and let it go note
it and let it go and it may be like
writing a bucking bronco sometimes may
be very unpleasant sometimes but it's
you know it's like a baptism by fire I
mean you have to go through the
fire I mean if you really are determined
you know you've got the
Adit to just push through you know you
got the the heroic mental state of just
doing whatever it

takes because that's really I mean
really in order to to make significant
progress in dhama you you've got to like
go Where Angels Fear To Tread sometimes
you know you got to just weighed into it
you just got to face the ickiest stuff
that comes

up so I mean if if you really don't have
that heroic effort then yeah you might
want to just kind of ease in you know if
you say it if you meditate for too long
for too many days in a row then just
meditate just a little bit less so that
that doesn't happen but just keep
meditating and making effort and making
gradual progress until finally either

you know you will have gradually eroded
away this stuff without having to face
it in its enormity or at least you'll be
you'll be stronger so that you'll be
able to face it

better so I'll just move on to covac and
CAD Z now next question oops and the
computer is telling me that I have to
plug in

in my

golly and I don't even have this I don't
just a

minute is that it no

Oh by

golly now if I wanted to be professional
I could just like edit this part out but
this is kind of like postmodernism in

q&as where you just include this
stuff all right the computer just sighed
this a of
relief okay now where was it oh
yeah see action CAD Z's next question is
I remember you say that mantras or
chanting probably won't get you very far
because they don't let your mind become
as subtle in
meditation still a little bit winded
from running to get the computer cord
however most Hindus solely do this kind
of meditation due to devotional
practices I remember you claim that
Hindus are usually more advanced than
Buddhists because Buddhists focus more

on bailing out immediately but how are these Hindus become so Advanced if they are just mostly just meditating with mantras and such

well some Mantra if it's a very simple Mantra like om or Ram which is what a lot of of Hindus do it's so simple it's almost like an out breath like like when I would do when I do M you know it's just the out breath is is turned into an m so something that simple you could probably get about as far with it as you can with just meditation on the breath and also even more complicated mantras if you've done it just every day for hours like for years it just becomes

this automatic thing that your body is doing and then you can just detach your mind from that and just observe the processes if you are so inclined to do so um it's not this question I think it's a later question that says that Hindus only do some but that is somewhat of a misconception I guess I'll get to that when the question comes up but another thing about Hindus is that they're some of them anyway are just very strict in their aestheticism more so than most Buddhists nowadays and by aestheticism I don't mean like self- torture stuff but I mean it's just

like if you like it avoid it that kind
of a thing just
self-denial and that can get you very
far in life that's schopenhauer talks a
lot about that in fact according to
schopenhauer that is how you get
enlightened is just denying the will
just just refusing to do what your the
will is telling you to do and Hindus are
fairly good at that if they're serious
practitioners at least some of
them

so yeah he says here I remember you
claim that Hindus are usually more
advanced than Buddhists well I
mean it depends on advance I mean it's
like they they're more on the road to to

more and more and more Purity you know

more and more and more saintliness

because again Buddhists have found that

you don't have there is no end to this

path of Purity there is no end to it you

know it doesn't you don't have this this

middle path leading straight to the

gates of nibana it doesn't work that way

you just follow the path until you don't

need to follow it anymore and then you

just bail

out and so the Hindus go farther along

this path apparently not not realizing

to the extent that Buddhists do that I

mean you can

transcend at virtually any point along

the path some people need to get farther
into the the silence and Stillness and
Clarity in order to stop being
distracted by all of this samsaric
[__] but other people that have some
good like intuitive Talent some
insight they I mean they can they can
bail out in the middle of a stormy
sea just you know sh [__] hitting the
fan they can still bail out in the
middle of
that

so how are these Hindus becoming so
Advanced if they're mostly just
meditating with mantras and such partly
it's through the self-denial partly it's
just this intense faith that just drives

them you know sort of like medieval Catholic saints they just have this stainless steel unquestioning faith and devotion that would push them through where a kind of luk warm philosophical Detachment despite its power in certain ways just won't get them there so and also a lot of Hindus I mean if you if you follow the idea of rebirth and so on that they've just been you know birth after birth just following the same path and so they're getting farther and farther with it even though some of them may be able to go into these profound trans States they can just sit there without moving for a week

straight on and on still they're not
enlightened because you know they're
just following this path of greater and
greater Purity that has no
end and they don't get they don't
realize they can just bail out sideways
maybe they don't even want to bail out
sideways so

anyways I'll just move on to the next
question also from covac and sead
zida which is as

follows I noticed in the last video you
said Mia's parents didn't become
enlightened L sodas but I think all Aras
are considered enlightened not just
arant because they've seen the truth of
damama also a few weeks ago I I asked

about the dhaku or the dhama I and how
seeing that everything which arises
eventually ceases isn't what other
religious people would consider
enlightened but this phrasing has always
been interpreted as them realizing Nana
for themselves and seeing the reality of
the third Noble Truth so when Cath
Catholics use terms like beatific Vision
it seems more like this damak coup than
being an
arant as for Hari
Krishna claiming to not identify with
the body or intentions anymore ident
ident identify
view these things sound more like

characters described with stream entry
even though this might not originally
ever been described as part of the
damaku but later tradition would say
just having the experience of sensation
for the first time causes loss of
identity view based on this don't you
think it's easy for people in other
Traditions to easily think they are done
when they have just gotten to stage one
according to Buddhism I mean it seems
most common in people who dismiss the
idea of the 10 Fetters even in Buddhism
well this is kind of
a kind of a complicated and slightly
confusing question
also kind of a long question but I mean

soap it came later to mean someone who's
had at least a glimpse of nibana you
know they're they can't backslide
they're guaranteed Enlightenment within
X number of lives you know they can no
longer tell lies they can't be reborn in
the lower Realms anymore but I don't
think that was the original meaning and
furthermore the whole story of Mandi is
gandia and his wife becoming s upon us
when the Buddha dissed their beautiful
daughter it's all commentarial
literature and it could have been
composed centuries
later
um so I mean it's the whole thing about

what exactly a soda has attained is

somewhat

academic because even the the definition

of it is somewhat controversial at least

to

me so

then then the question kind of veers

into

how maybe what some religions consider

to be the highest goal is really nothing

more than becoming a

soda but I don't think so I think

originally sod was just sort of like

being born again you know it's sort of

you know Christianity early Christianity

especially talked about this a lot

um so I mean it just means that you've

entered onto the spiritual ual path you
know

seriously so let's

see when Catholics use terms like

beatific Vision it sounds more like this

Dum well it does the beatific Vision I

mean you can't even experience that

until after you've died and gone to

heaven and then the the beatific vision

is you're seeing the Throne of God with

the angels clustered around it falling

on their faces over and over again and

all

that so yeah I think that would be very

different Hari krishna's

yeah I've read some Hari Krishna

literature but I really don't think they
get it very much maybe they do just in a
very different way than I

do so let way a little bit through this
question here so maybe this is the
question this is the main question here
based on this don't you think it's easy
for people in other Traditions to easily
think they are done when they have just
gotten to stage one according to

Buddhism yeah I mean it it goes both
ways like I read a biography of oh Shri
chin no not Shri chinmoy

who's oh I can't remember his name he
was a very famous Indian

Guru mid 20th
century

Shri sh

something and uh he was claiming or at least his biographer was claiming that he claimed that his spiritual path begins with nibana like he he experienced the Buddhist Nirvana wasn't impressed you know and then he just moves from there I mean that's like his foundation which strikes me as just utter [__] whatever he attained wasn't really Nirvana he just called it that because he didn't have a very high opinion of Buddhists I guess Tri arob bindo that was his name

so yeah I mean it happens so much that

um I've met lots of people that think
that they're Aras just because they had
some weird experience you know they had
some aha moment you know they had a
Moment of clarity in their meditation or
whatever had some kind of fireworks
going on subjectively with sitting their
Crossing with their eyes closed whatever
it was they think that they've got it
and you know they behave pretty much the
same as before except they smile more
you know they might move a little slower
you know they're more
smug so yeah it's just a it's just a

Rat's Nest

it's whatever I mean it goes all over
the all over the place but I most people

who think that they're enlightened

aren't even if they're

Buddhists I mean if you just think that

you're enlightened you're it's a pretty

good indication that you aren't because

an enlightened being isn't going to be

thinking golly I'm

enlightened so I think I'll just move on

to the next question

here and that is what is the nine 69

movement in Burma well it's it's a pro

Buddhist movement and also

um pretty much to the same degree it's

an anti-muslim movement in Burma and 969

is referring to the qualities of Buddha

dhama and S if you do the the standard

recitations like a mantra and a lot of
Burmese people do it with the rosary
that you know the Buddha has nine
qualities dhama has six qualities sa has
nine qualities so 969 is just referring
to budhha dama

sa and uh yeah I mean they want Burma to
remain a Buddhist country and they don't
want Muslim immigrants or they want few
Muslim immigrants they don't want mass
migrations of Muslim IM

immigrants and certain large groups of
Muslims like the ringas they would
prefer to just go away they're not
really advocating genocide or terrorism
somewh much like uh some people would
would say but uh I mean it does happen

to some degree there is violence going both ways like in Burma I'm just continually hearing about you know some Muslim Village or Muslim neighborhood gets burned down because Muslims gang raped a good Buddhist Burmese girl but whether they really did that or not I mean you know that's that's the excuse they give you know that's the reason that they State and it may be true but of course I wasn't there there and I really don't know and I know how rumors and so forth spread like wildfire in Burma and a great many of them are not based on empirical reality but I think the Burmese have the

right to prefer that Islam not mess up
their

country you know I mean Muslim countries
have the right to decide they don't want
Buddhism coming in like like in Malaysia
I mean you you can't it's against the
law to teach any religion other than
Islam to a Malaysian like an ethnic
Malaysian citizen that you can go to
jail for teaching Buddhism in Malaysia
so it goes both

ways so I'll just move on to CAC and CAD
Z's next and last

question I read There were different
meditation techniques for people with
different Tendencies such as meta for
angry people or 32 to body part

meditation for sensual people what kind of meditation techniques are recommended for someone with a depressive Tendencies cowardly Tendencies or a lazy tendency well this mainly comes from the wisi MAA where they divide they divide uh people into six categories six temperaments which is Loba DOA mooha and like the opposite of looba DOA and mooha and so

I assume that cowardliness would be a kind of fear which in a way is a kind of delsa so maybe meta meditation would work for for cowardly people I've I've uh heard recently and I've heard you know longer ago the theory that fear is

the opposite of Love which I don't
really buy but again that would be that
would sort of make um meta meditation
good for cowardly people
uh depressive Tendencies
um maybe that would be the moha
temperament and I haven't read the Wii
MAA recently enough to remember what
what kind of meditation would be
prescribed for that but you can find it
in the wisi manga and the lazy tendency
gosh maybe walking
meditation yeah but I mean it doesn't
really mention lazy tendency in the Wii
Maga or in like um maybe somewhere in
terraa Buddhist tradition there's like
you know a special certain kind of

meditation prescribed for lazy people or people that are just gloomy and morose and

depressed but I don't recall what that would be so I'm just going to move on the next question here this is from the ARA sasi project and this is another kind of complicated confusing question that I do not completely understand here let's consider that on one hand we have a hyper racist fanatical ingroup preference tribe of people and on the other hand we have an egalitarian fanatical integration by force or whatever means never mind who is behind it all if we take the first amendments

protection of freedom of Association

would you say that race

realism uh which is the fact of the

matter that there are and always have

been racial differences is the middle

path and finally noting these

differences not imposing personal

preferences upon others is in line with

Buddhist

principles um well there's lots of

different middle paths I mean like in

the in the first sermon or the the Daka

patan which is considered to be the

Buddhist first sermon according to

tradition he is saying that you know the

middle path is between self-indulgence

and self- torture but then there's lots

of other middle paths like you know the middle path between is and isn't which is dependent core Rising for example um just running away from problems or seeking out problems you know the middle path would go in between those um so just acknowledging empirical evidence you know just being objective in a way it's kind of a middle path between biased one way or biased the other way although you're still going to be biased in favor of empirical evidence so I mean it's you could you could call it a middle path you know there's lots of different middle paths out there so long as it's a a path

between two extremes you can call it a
middle path a middle path not the middle
path

so see here and finally noticing these
differences not imposing personal
preferences upon others is in line with
Buddhist principles well yeah you don't
want to impose your beliefs on other
people just forcing other people to
at least pretend to believe what you
believe that's in a way that's
tyrannical

so uh yeah I I hope I answered that
question we've got so many questions
here we've already been going at it for
half an hour so I'm just gonna I'm just
gonna move on I think maybe I answered

that question

maybe so I'll just move on the next one

this is from Indiana

dama and uh I'm not sure if there's even

a question mark in this oh yeah yeah

there's a question

mark okay so Indiana dama says my mother

had an outof body experience in the

early 1980s her father had died several

months before she had this experience

she was pregnant with my older brother

at the time and was napping on her couch

when she experienced as she puts it a

feeling of rising up out of her body and

then floating high up above the clouds

she stopped floating in some kind kind

of celestial Heavenly realm her father was there along with a being whose face was obscured by a cloud or Mist her father spoke to her hugged her told her some personal stuff and then told her that he had hidden \$100 in his Bible she then returned to her body she called her mother the Widow of my grandfather and told her the story my grandmother opened up Grandpa's Bible and there were two \$50 bills tucked in between the pages mother did not have a good relationship with her father and they lived in different states the last few years of his life and here's the question part is there a Terrain way of understanding this kind of

experience and then he continues with it does not appear to be purely psychological in nature and I have heard of other outof body experiences and near-death experiences that where some kind of corroborating evidence like the money in the Bible was found yeah I've read about like near-death experiences and outof body experiences where there was

corroborating evidence like there was one case of a woman who was had a near-death experience on a hospital table while she was undergoing surgery like she just was clinically dead for a few minutes and her body like lifted up

you know she can see the dust on the the
top side of the fluorescent lights over
the over the operating table and then
she kind of drifts out this window and
she sees a shoe on a Ledge outside the
window that you couldn't see from down
below you'd have to like open this
window and the window was like
permanently closed too and she could see
this shoe there and then finally you
know the she has more of those
stereotypical experiences of going into
the heaven realm and you going through
the bright light and seeing the spirit
guide in heaven and so
forth but after she returned to her
body and you know she was awake and able

to speak she asked somebody if they
could check to see if there really was
that shoe there and it it really was
there

so this kind of stuff does
happen

but I

think something like Mary Baker Eddie's
explanation of like interaction with
Spirits is actually a good it's a good
explanation and Mary Baker Eddie the the
founder of Christian Science said that
there are spirits in this universe but
as a general rule They Don't Care About
Us you know they got their own lives to
live you know sort of like we don't care

about what ants are doing in some vacant
lot down the street you know it's just
we got our own lives to live but
everybody has a certain amount of latent
psychic ability because really we're all
kind of connected with this whole Cosmic
scheme of
things we're just connected with reality
I mean we are part of reality reality
just pervades
us so we've got psychic abilities but
for the most part we are conditioned not
to believe that we have psychic
abilities and so what happens in these
dream states or youve got this housewife
who starts channeling some other being
which is really I mean according to Mary

Baker editi this being that she's channeling is just conjured up by her own subconscious imagination as a kind of gimmick or crutch to get the psychic knowledge out you know she can't believe that she's doing it herself she's too humble for that or too materialistic but she can believe that some other being is and she's just serving as a mouthpiece for this this other being and I think that some of these kind of psychic events like in the near-death experiences it could be it could be similar to that where um you're having a psychic experience you know you're attaining knowledge through extra

sensory perception so to speak but I mean you need some kind of gimmick to make make it to make it uh believable to yourself you know you have to have some kind of narrative that makes enough sense to you that you can accept it you know that you won't just block it out and so rather than just have the the psychic vision of the \$100 in the Bible it just happened to her spontaneously you know it it comes in a convoluted form through this interaction with her deceased father or it may be that she really did communicate with her deceased father who you know he still sticking around because he thought the \$100 in the Bible was important or just

reconciling with his daughter to some degree was important so that you know it kept him attached so that he wasn't able to move on until he got this off his chest I mean that's possible too I think both of those would be uh acceptable in in terada

Buddhism although seeing everything in Christian imagery for example um you know that would be your own projection onto a deeper experience in order to make it believable or or whatever to yourself

so I think uh I think I answered that one so I'm just going to move on to the next one and this is from Indian guy an

Indian guy says I just took my triple
Gem and five precepts at a Mahayana
Monastery that is descended from TI not
Han and it's amazing I really wanted to
go the to the I really wanted to go the
Terra Vaden route but the Thai temple we
have here is pretty much conservative
and only does the service in Thai so I
had to go somewhere that made it more
accessible to the Western Buddhist I
don't think it really matters which word
or what type of Buddhism I practice do
you think that choosing a Mahayana
Monastery to learn from is wrong View
well I think choosing just about anybody
or anything to learn from any tradition
is going to have some wrong View and

even Theravāda Buddhism has got some wrong
view in

it I mean you get to the get down to
just the fundamental level all view is
wrong view which is just why it's called
Dṛṣṭi just view you should avoid

view but Mahayana is in all likelihood
is going to have more than

theravāda at least from an orthodox
Buddhist point of

view especially an orthodox theravāda

Buddhist point of view so let's see

here I don't think it really matters

which word or what type of Buddhism I

practice he says well I mean if you're a

beginner um you haven't made it very far

or or you're Advanced enough that you
can just dismiss whatever isn't relevant
and just do the practice I in either one
of those cases you may be
correct um I would avoid taking any buy
of vows

though so I guess I guess I answer that
question I mean taking eight taking five
precepts and and three refuges at a
Mahayana Buddhist place is better than
not taking them at all

certainly and uh I mean if if they're
telling you stuff that just intuitively
just feels right to you then you're not
not entirely wrong I

suppose I mean I was interested in Zen
at first Tian definitely has some weird

views weird understandings he just dismisses or rejects some fundamental teachings of Buddhism like I remember reading once he's like how can you believe that that everything is suffering when you look into The Shining eyes of a child this kind of stuff and that's yeah that's that's heresy but if you get more benefit than harm from it then you're not doing anything particularly bad so I'll just move on to Indian guys next question do you think it matters that I don't want to believe everything in a book or system no that's good if you don't want to believe everything in a

book or system I don't believe
everything in a book or system either um
if it takes like a medieval mentality
really to believe everything in a book
or a system there are a lot of people a
lot of normies you know they'll just
believe whatever the Baptist Church
teaches them or they'll believe anything
the Democratic party teaches them or the
Communist party or whatever it
is they'll just believe that and in a
way they're enslaved to their beliefs in
a way they're just sheep being led by
other people's beliefs or it's not even
necessarily other people's beliefs it's
just beliefs that other people are
imposing on them to make them more you

know more manageable make them vote the way they want them to or behave the way they want them to or whatever whatever but uh in the west it's just the way we are that we're not just going to swallow Hook Line and Sinker you know whatever some tradition teaches us even if it's our own chosen tradition in many cases like for me like Abid dama it just never resonated with me it was just a it was just a thud from the beginning just a clunk you know it didn't there was no intuitive yes I acknowledged this is this feels right none of that and then the more I studied it the more I realized

that most Scholars agree and that's in a way that's good it's like some of the stuff that I like the most in Buddhism I found out later that that's considered to be some of the most ancient earliest teachings you know like the ATA waga and other stuff like abama that I never had any interest in never really trusted then I read later that the scholars are saying yes that came you know that was invented 100 years later or hundreds of years

later so no I think that it does matter that you don't want to believe everything in a book or a system but it's actually good for you especially if you have enough

sense to choose more wisely than some tradition for most people I think just conforming I mean if you're below average in intelligence or wisdom or whatever conforming to some established system probably is going to be to your benefit if the system is wiser than you are but once you get to a level where you're able to discern for yourself what works for you and doesn't work for you and what's likely to be right and what's likely to be [__] then you're doing well to deviate from you know the the mass of view which may get you into trouble but uh at least nowadays it's less likely to get you burned at the

stake so I'll just move on to the next question also from Indian guy and he says I believe in the Buddhist Supreme Enlightenment in that this is not reality this is not reality seems that Mahayana and Terra vadens disregard each other is getting everyone divided and confused okay this is not not even a question but yeah I mean disregarding each other I don't know I mean that could go either way it depends on the motive behind it I mean that's one of the main themes of these q&as it's not the outward action that really has ethical value it's your own will that's

motivating that action that has ethical value so I'll just that wasn't a question anyway so I'm just moving on to the next one which is from Mambo and Mambo says hello poo my first question is about monastic life and the Buddha if sidart sidart DOA enjoyed all the pleasures of samsara like marriage sex and becoming a father prior to becoming the Buddha then how did he get Enlightenment hasn't he already gained Karma by engaging in sexual activities in that life he did things which are antim monastic although he did become a monk in the later half of his life in in the latter half of his life

but Karm the karma he generated remains
after Nirvana there's no coming back so
what happened to the karmas Buddha
generated in this life okay there's
that's two questions isn't it okay so
the first question
is like how did the Buddha become
enlightened by after he got all this
karma from living a lay life and you do
not when you become Enlighten you do not
exhaust your karma in a way you just
sort of invalidate it you you neutralize
it you know it doesn't have power
anymore really over over your mind
really
but I mean it's still there like the
story I've told many times mahamana who

was one of the the Buddhist Two Chief
disciples um he was murdered he was
literally beaten to a pulp by Angry non-
Buddhists um because of his past Karma
he wasn't making any a new Karma because
he was enlightened but still you got
this past karma that's going to continue
having effects until you finally die and
pass into Parana and are no longer
reborn into some
sorrow so in addition to I mean the
karma he created the beginning of this
life I mean he had Karma going back you
know in countless lifetimes you know
assuming that there is rebirth so the
point is that when you become

enlightened you are not exhausting your
karma you're not making any new Karma
but the past Karma still has its effects
at least superficially you know it's
apparent to other people anyway that
these things are happening it's hard to
say exactly what the subjective
experience of the Buddha would
be so yeah he gained Karma by engaging
in sexual activities and all sorts of
sensual indulgences and so forth he did
things that were antimonastic but in a
way he had to go through that and I mean
sometimes the best monks are the ones
who live a worldly life before they are
ordained it's
like

um it's like some of the best monks that
that are Western monks I mean they
they've done it all they've had it all
and they still weren't satisfied and so
they knew you know there's there's
something better than this whereas some
monks like Asian monks that were
ordained as not noices as children that
have just lived in a monastery their
whole life on the one hand you can't
miss what you never experienced so in a
way they've got that in their favor you
know they they had less rascality when
they were young so I mean that's kind of
in their favor they didn't make it lots
of new Bad Karma but still I mean

they're kind of Clueless and they have less resistance to Temptation so I guess the main answer to this question is that when you become enlightened you your karma just doesn't come to an end you don't exhaust it it's not like the Janes The Janes believed you have to exhaust your karma in order to go up into heaven and immortality and all that Buddhists don't teach that so I think I answered that I'll just move on to Mambo's next question which was actually the second part of his first question after Nirvana there's no coming back so what happened to the karmas Buddha generated in his life that's a good question first of all it

was

neutralized so like I said it's like the karma was still there but it didn't have any power anymore it just just sort of like this like a phantom show and I guess once it's neutralized I mean once it's deprived of any power then it just collapses after the after the body is gone but I've never I don't recall ever coming upon any like Abid dama scholar or any Buddhist text explaining what happens to the residual Karma of an enlightened being after he dies because you don't exhaust all of it but I assume it's because an Arun neutralizes his karma that it

doesn't have the same effect on him that it has on on normies on pugena so that it's in a way it's just has like this zero value and it's you know it's just sort of a show like a a virtual virtual entity or something that just collapses because there's nothing really supporting it anymore you know anything that exists has to have these conditioning factors keeping it in existence and so when the Buddha's personality and body die then the supporting factors for his karma collapse and so the karma the residual Karma collapses I assume that would be the correct answer from an orthodox position so I'll just move on to Mambo's

next

question which is about the age limit of joining a Buddhist

sa do you think a kid is capable of making his own decision to join a

Buddhist Monastery let's say for example in ladak he has no will he is just

forced into that life by the Elders of his family shouldn't a Seeker first

experience at least some realities and hardships of samsara before willingly

joining any monastic order since Buddha also experienced Sam SAR before becoming

a monk what's your opinion on the

practice of recruiting young kids into a monastic life is it a good thing or a

bad thing according to you well it can go both ways like I was already suggesting um just a minute or two ago that like the founder of the tradition in which I was I was ordained venerable Tom P Luci was ordained as a child novice when he was like 9 years old my teacher in Burma my main teacher V pooku seato or Tulu chind doya seato also was ordained as a novice when he was about 9 years old and so I mean they were virgins they'd never gotten drunk they probably never danced you know there's all these things they'd never done but it was like dhama was all they knew and they were good at it and it's probably to some degree their

karma I mean this question disregards

Karma

and I mean you can use karma for victim

blaming but you can also use it for you

know the opposite of victim blaming

which would be what successful person

praising or something where I mean this

their karma to get sent to a monastery

as a

child so I mean NE coroli Baba whose

picture is up there on the altar

according to Legend he just ran away

from home when he was a little kid and

just became a forest dwelling sadu when

he was a child so that in that case that

was his wise decision but he was still

just a little kid when he made the decision and in that case a kid is capable of making his own decisions um to renounce the world um it's becoming somewhat less common in Burma nowadays because Burma is modernizing but uh still lots of kids just get sent to a monastery when they're little kids some of them just have a vocation they want to go but and then that would be sort of like parame me you know it's like their karma is just sort of impelling them in that direction but a lot of kids they just wind up they don't have a spiritual vacation at all and they're just stay at

a monastery for their entire life just
because they don't know anything else
they don't know how to make a living or
whatever so it can go either
way so I

mean it's good to have a
variety I guess diversity is our
strength let's see here did I fully
answer that question

though uh shouldn't a Seeker first
experience at least some realities in
hardships

realities of some Sor before willingly
joining any monastic order yeah I mean
it works both ways it it can work both
ways and it can just be a fiasco both

ways like some people that um they're do
twet in

Burmese there's what P I think it's
called and doet Shimp Pew and and doet
shim Pew means you're ordained as a
child that means you're just innocent
you're just an innocent person you know
you haven't haven't had much chance to
just really you know be a rascal and
then there's do twet which means someone
who goes out into the forest you know
like the Buddha did that after you've
already lived a worldly life maybe
gotten married maybe had a family you
know you had a job you you've had sex
you know maybe you've gotten drunk and
then you become a monk um there is a

saying in in Burma

do a which means someone who is ordained

later in life is hard to admonish that

you're just they're just hard to guide

because they're already setting their

ways you know you know they they've got

maybe even like a hardened cynicism or

skepticism or lukewarmness about them

that they cultivated as a lay person so

really it can go both

ways and so considering the huge

merciless onslaught of questions in this

video I'm just going to move on to the

next question here this is from Libra

lamb and Libra lamb is notorious for

asking

very cerebral kind of
questions which sometimes I don't
understand very well so his first
question is do you believe that phenomen
technology is relevant to science such
that the next Paradigm Shift
breakthrough will come through
parapsychology and the mystical as
opposed to particle physics discovering
a new particle or something and I was
going to look up phenomenology in the
dictionary I'm going to do it right now
I've got a dictionary here on
this
computer
phenomenology the science of phenomena
is distinct from that of the nature of

of being or an approach that
concentrates on the study of
Consciousness and the objects of direct
experience so I guess that's what it
would

mean and I was thinking maybe like
heelan dialectic is also kind of a
phenomenology

but I guess that would concentrate
on the human consciousness too because
he was an idealist didn't even believe
in physical

man so I'll ask this question again or
just read it

do you believe that

phenomenology is relevant to science

such that the next Paradigm Shift
breakthrough will come through
parapsychology and the mystical as
opposed to particle physics discovering
a new particle or something I'm not sure
how much mysticism is going to influence
science because they're almost opposites
uh possibly parasitology but like
quantum physics is becoming more and
more paranormal just just stuff that
they've already discovered like you know
the Observer is is
determining you know it's it's like
you've got everything in this state of
uncertainty until You' got a perceiving
mind that perceives it and collapses the
state Vector so to speak you know and

then then you see just this one discreet
thing but if a different person had
observed it first it might have turned
out differently that that's already
getting into the point of you know mind
has this profound effect on the
phenomena that we
observe and I do think that the next
cernac revolution in science will be the
realization that energy and
Consciousness are the same so the entire
universe is conscious in a in in
effect that what a physicist calls
energy is just a very
Elemental like a spark of Consciousness
it can't think or anything like that you

know like

uh a hydrogen atom or or an electron

cannot think it doesn't have perceptions

but it is like this tiny Elemental spark

of what mind is made of and I think most

scientists would have to agree with that

because you know everything is

ultimately a manifestation of energy

nowadays ever since relativity came

along

so and then and then it would be the

other way too like what a psychologist

calls mind or Consciousness would be a

very complicated elaborate form of what

a physicist would call energy and I

think yeah I think that's what the

physicist would already have to agree on

so then it have to come back the other way and then once you can get it established in science that really we are living in a kind of virtual reality you know that we are creating our own reality then uh yeah that would definitely be a cernic revolution but how it will come about whether it'll be Quantum you know like theoretical physicists who come up with it maybe theoretical physicists who have an interest in eastern philosophy and meditate that's possible I mean it would have to be some kind of scientist I don't think the next kernic revolution in science is going to

happen due to discoveries of someone who isn't a scientist or at least it's going to have to get incorporated into science through

scientists and so

um maybe parapsychology but I think it

it would have to be just under just

considering human nature it would have

to be some high-profile real really like

uh based in in Normy mainstream

science who just comes up with this and

then of course it's going to be debated

and reviled and and rebuked and

criticized and and made fun of until

finally people settle down and say yeah

okay sort of like like Darwin and his uh

theories of evolution you know it wasn't

just accepted all at once even Einstein
didn't get the Nobel Prize for um his
like

relativity you know like his theories of
Relativity he didn't get the Nobel Prize
for that he he got it later um for like
the photo El electric effect he

discovered the photo El electric effect
he got the Nobel Prize for that just
because the relativity thing it was so
controversial just turned everything
upside down and caused such a [__] storm
especially with conservative scientists
just just hating it and just arguing
against it because they didn't want to
change what they'd been believing for

decades that uh it took a while for it to to get accepted and it probably have to be something like that just a really solid high-profile scientist maybe one who's already won the Nobel Prize to come up with a really elegant Theory to explain how the universe is a manifest station of mind in a way that makes predictions and can be verified and whether that's even possible or not I don't know how can you prove that matter does or does not exist so I guess I spent enough time on that question I'll just move on to Libra

Lamb's next cerebral question here do you think it would be better for Humanity if we did away with

intellectual property um no I don't think it would be better like for example somebody invents something um and they really don't have the capital to just start up a factory and start producing this new invention they want to sell their invention to somebody who does have the ability to mass produce it and then if you don't have intellectual property you'll say here's my idea and they'll say great we'll just not going to pay you anything we'll just take that idea I mean if there's no intellectual property then people could just do that and it would very much reduce the incentive or the motivation

for inventors to innovate to come up
with new stuff if I mean if you're not
going to get credit for it you're not
gonna get you know you're not going to
get paid for

it I mean sometimes they will you know
they work for the company and the
company gives them this big bonus for
you know making so much extra money for
the company because they invented this
new thing that really is popular

whatever but you got some guy who
invents something in his garage he's
just

screwed or

you know it's like a writer how is he
going to make money by publishing books

unless he just self-publishes otherwise
people can just rip it off they can just
pirate it you know he's he's
self-publishing and then like random
house just likes that book and they just
take it and start publishing it and
don't pay him any royalties because
intellectual property doesn't
exist so yeah I think it is good to have
intellectual
property and then have the the copyright
just last I don't know it's like what is
it 80 years 85 years or something before
something go becomes public domain like
a novel or something you know that's
reasonable to me so I'll just go on to

Libra Lam's next question here do you believe that enlightened beings could inform our civilization to operate in a way which nurtures Dharma better than an ordinary person could by virtue of insight into higher spiritual life well I mean that's been going on for Millennia I mean you do have enlightened beings who are influencing World culture or you got at least wise beings you got the Buddha started Buddhism you know I mean that has had profound effects throughout the world you know Jesus of Nazareth regardless of whether he was an arant or not obviously he has just had this profound effect on civilization but what happens is even if

you got enlightened being who says it's good to have civilization be this way and not that way and even if you got people following that advice or doing their best to follow it the people that are following that advice like the politicians they're normies and so you take this enlightened idea and put it into the mind of a normie it's like taking crystal clear water and pouring it into like a mud cak cup of and it just turns into muddy water immediately so people are just going to mess it up like they messed up Christianity people have messed up Buddhism I mean any kind of enlightened

idea that comes from an enlightened
being even that even if people accept
that and want to live in accordance with
that it's just going to get messed up
because people are messed up people are
foolish and you take wisdom and you put
it into a foolish mind and I mean that's
it it just turns into
foolishness so

do you believe that enlightened beings
could inform our civilization to open in
a way which nurtures Dharma better than
an ordinary person could by virtue yeah
I assume so and there's a famous Rush
song about that too was it closer to the
heart I think
so so I think I'll just move on to the

next question by Libra Lam here and
remember it's it's four questions is the
limit from now on at least until further
notice his next question is do you
imagine there is a connection between
ancient vdic astrology and
psychics and the idea of factors of
self-existence preceding birth and
continuing after death I don't know what
kind of connection it would
be the idea of f well the thing is
ancient vdic astrology was very crude I
don't think that astrology as we know it
even made it to India except through
trade routes through like Mesopotamia IA
that the ancient I mean I've looked into

ancient Indian astrology as it existed in the Buddhist time or rather astronomy and it was very crude I mean mainly what the vidic priests were interested in was man dog is making weird noises it really distracts

me what the the Vic priests were really interested it was just knowing when the full moon was going to appear in a certain const a because that would be the time of doing this elaborate fire sacrifice so they would have to use the night sky as a calendar to plan their rituals and that was the main purpose of astrology in Northern India until well after the Buddhist time regard to the psychics it's hard to

say but the idea of factors of
self-existence preceding birth and
continuing after death that I'm pretty
sure was derived not So Much from the
vad tradition as from the indis valley
civilization that had uh definitely a
kind of belief in karma and just rebirth
it seems to
me

so yeah I guess I answered that question
if there is a connection between ancient
vadic astrology and psychics on the one
hand and the belief in like rebirth and
and afterlife and so forth on the other
it would be a sort of a very indirect
not a very strong

connection because I don't think that one is derived from the other so we'll just move on to Libra Lamb's next and last question if you were a young Buddhist aspirant again knowing how different monastic communities operate which would you choose and I think I'm I'm happy to say that I probably choose exactly what I wound up with although I might start with a different Monastery but the burmes for Forest tradition like the Tom Pulu tradition um that was just like my karma just set me up in the right place at the right time I mean maybe you know there is like a reform movement of very strict Buddhists in Sri Lanka maybe that would have worked too I

really am not drawn to tie

Buddhism

um so yeah I think probably burmes

terraa would still be U my first choice

and maybe like like that reform terra

terra voden Reform movement in Sri Lanka

might be my second choice and then third

choice may be some really strict good

Zen

Monastery so yeah I guess I answered

that one so I'll just move on to the

next question this is from

Arin and Arin says how would the Buddha

view fundamentalist Christian Traditions

like working themselves into a frenzy

while being possessed and compelled by

the Holy Spirit while Rising on the
floor or speaking in
tongues

well uh like flagellation like that
medieval you know there were Medieval
sects that would just literally whip
themselves until the blood was flowing
down their back that would definitely be
um yeah self- torture that would be
frowned upon by Orthodox Buddhism also
people being possessed by the Holy
Spirit would be frowned upon because
Spirit possess is frowned upon in
Buddhist tradition I mean they're not
going to acknowledge the Holy Spirit as
God a manifestation of God
almighty um so I mean possession by a

spirit which is what this possession about the Holy Spirit presumably is while they really are just babbling speaking in tongues or foaming at the mouth and and so forth um yeah that in and of itself would not be considered uh particularly wholesome even event although it can be that some of these people are undergoing this deep transformation um I've talked about this before like how methodism began where John Wesley would give these um give these sermons and the first half is just pointing out something that Christians in the 1700s couldn't really deny and that is if you don't repent you're going

to burn in hell if you don't
mend your ways and live a good Christian
Life you're going to burn in hell in the
second half of his discourse or his
sermon would be just going into Grizzly
detail over the tortures of hell until
people who could not deny this you know
just because of their cultural their
cultural conditioning would start
freaking out and theyd just like
collapse and and just go into this
frenzy and foaming at the mouth and like
barking like dogs and finally they would
just faint and become unconscious and
and then when they would wake up they'd
be born again it would be a
transformative experience just through

the the sheer

crisis of of what they went through it
would cause their old habits to break
down and then they'd be open to a new
way of looking at things and something
like that even though it may have a lot
of unh wholesome stuff or negative stuff
in it if it produces more positive than
negative in the long run still it would
be acceptable I

think but just in and of itself being
possessed and ring on the floor and
speaking in tongues maybe after dancing
around with rattlesnakes or drinking
cyanide or whatever or is it strick nine
then yeah that in it in and of itself

unless it produces a greater good that outweighs the bad then yeah that would not be um endorsed in

Buddhism so we'll just move on on to arin's next question here what would the Buddha teach in regards to the Jews and Muslims still trying to genocide each other today after thousands of years of their ongoing religious battles well I'm not entirely convinced that the Jews want to genocide Muslims although it's pretty clear that Muslims a lot of Muslims would be totally fine with genociding Jews especially the ones in Israel um yeah the Jews are I mean they're they're killing lots of Muslims lately

but it's mainly their their main mission
is just to completely annihilate
 Hamas and you you got to break a few
eggs to make the the anti Hamas omelet
apparently also they they've learned and
I think this is probably a good call on
their part that if if like some organiz
some Muslim organization hits them
they're going to hit back you know at
least five times as
hard and yeah that makes sense I can I
can accept that much um what would the
Buddha teach in regards to you know Jews
and Muslims trying to genocide each
other after thousands of years of their
ongoing well I mean it just points out I

mean like there's one of the early
verses of the uh of the dapas to the
extent that you know hate does not end
hate you know it's only non-hate ends
hate so I mean obviously Buddhism takes
a dim view of genocide in general
genocide is not good if you if you only
learn one thing from this Q&A that would
be it don't do
genocide so yeah I mean there's all
sorts of things the Buddha could say
with regard to you know one group and
another group just being at war in this
Blood Vendetta back and forth for you
know countless Generations even you know
it's just pointing out that blood
vendettas don't work in the long run I

mean kind of they can keep an
uneasy sort of like a quasi stability
going like um Arabia in before Islam
took over you know that was pretty much
the only thing keeping people from just
like completely attacking each other was
the knowledge that if you attack this
person who belongs to tribe A tribe A is
going to wipe out one of your people in
retaliation but it's not dharmic and
just hate leads to more hate killing
leads to more killing and maybe the
Buddha would hold this up as a kind of
golden
example but um let's see did I answer
the question that is my question did I

answer that question just now

um yeah I mean he wouldn't really make

it a matter of religious beliefs or

religious War it would just be over

ideologies or just beliefs in general

you cling to a view it's going to make

you more likely to have a hostile view

to people who do not hold your view and

then of course they're going to have a

dim view of you for not holding theirs

and that's going to increase the

likelihood of conflict and violence and

in extreme cases

genocide so we'll just move on to irin's

next question how should we conduct

ourselves as Buddhists when the

corporate media and the current potted

plant that we have in office are constantly attempting to brainwash the populace into choosing sides in their Wars well from a Buddhist point of view you just do not choose sides in a war if at all possible because you do not choose War I mean war is again it's just murder from from a Buddhist point of view it's just like government sponsored Mass slayings plus lots of stealing and so forth because you're taking their property after you kill them or even before you kill them I guess after you kill them it wouldn't be stealing because the

property would no longer have an owner so let's see here how should we conduct ourselves as Buddhists uh when the corporate media and the current potted plant that we have in office are constantly attempting to brainwash the population choosing sides in their War well that's been going on since there have been governments you know ever since the very beginning you know you read ancient history and of course the government is going to be justifying their War getting people to believe that this is a righteous war against forces of evil and so forth and we are the light of civilization and this these dark hordes

are trying to destroy us kind of stuff I
mean that goes back thousands of years

I'm

sure so it's not just corporate media
and the current potted plant it's I mean
it's just been that's been the case so
long as I mean since there's been
civilization and the thing you do is you
have to just wisely make your own
choices and realize that I mean you just
see what they're doing you know I mean a
wise person is going to be much less of
much less
susceptible of of propaganda than just
the Normie who just believes what he's
told I mean a certain amount of

skepticism is good I mean if the
intellect has a main purpose aside from
just helping you to navigate samsara and
you know pay your taxes and so forth
it's it's as a [_] detector and it
seems like most of what the government
tells people is [_] you know it's
it's
obviously designed to further the goals
of the
government like we have to sponsor a war
in such and such country you know it's
the we're sponsoring Freedom Fighters or
whatever you know it's we're trying to
support democracy there
but as often as not that is nowhere near
to being the

truth so how do we conduct ourselves as
Buddhists well you just don't condone
War to begin with and uh don't just
believe everything you're
told I mean if if you're a normi
Buddhist then you believe what Buddhism
tells you you know you read the suas and
believe that but yeah you still don't
believe what the government tells you
unless you got some good reason to
believe what the government tells you
which I assume occasionally you know
occasionally the government does tell
the
truth so I think I'll just move on the
next question here and this is from

pranav and pranav says how do the
brahmas above the second Janna survive
the end of the universe if their
lifespan is more than the universe well
I've I've discussed this uh a number of
times even with regard to um people and
even animals on this planet when you
know the material universe is destroyed
usually by fire then all the beings in
this Cosmos have to go to this very
Advanced Heaven realm that is above this
material universe and they got to stay
there until the next material Universe
re- evolves and then they come back down
again and as a general rule I've read
they eager they are just desperately
eager to come back down again because

it's just boring as hell up in this
immaterial Heaven realm where nothing
happens they're just not ready for it
yet and so all the beings that um would
be in a material Universe would have to
go up into this immaterial Heaven realm
that is above the level of this Cosmos
and just wait there until the next
Cosmos revolves they can come down
into so that applies to uh all beings
um you know all all beings that live in
a material Universe not just uh these
these brahmas so the next question is
from V China is coming [__]
cute and Vina is he asks is there any
risk a ghost might come on me while I

meditate

and I've actually been asked this before
I mean there's there are people that are
afraid to meditate because they think
that they'll be vulnerable to not just
ghosts but they think they'll go into a
trance and some burglar will break in
and do nasty horrible things to them and
they'll just be like completely in a
trance and won't won't be able to defend
themselves or something but uh I mean if
a ghost might come on someone when they
meditate it's generally the kind of
person a ghost might come on whether
they're meditating or
not and I mean if you've got a strong
mind then like if you're doing

mindfulness meditation then if if
there's like some sort of you know
external entity that's trying to mess
with you you just note it and let it go
note it and let it go and it it just I
mean it's like the best defense that
you've got because you're not
identifying with it you're I mean it's
it's like you're just de constructing it
you're depriving it of it of its
power in a sense and the more you
meditate the stronger your mind is going
to be which is going to defend you
against malevolent influences not just
ghosts but also like you know Witchcraft
and that sort of thing because you're

going to have a more grounded balance
centered kind of a mind that doesn't
have as many weak points that that can
be used for infiltration so to speak
like like possession and so
forth cu the people that that get
possessed or you know have these kind of
problems generally have weak spots in
their mind where you know it's just like
this like a window that can be used to
enter and if you meditate and observe
your mind carefully and it's it makes
your mind stronger and less likely to
have these weak these weak points that
can be used for infiltration by any kind
of malevolent forces including
propaganda for that

matter so I think I answered that
question um so long as I mean so long as
your meditation isn't just going into
like a
trance you know it's not you're not just
going into some kind of subliminal state
or um what's the word I'm trying to
think of like a surreal kind of a state
I mean you want to avoid that you just
want to stay objective and alert alert
Wide Awake note whatever happens you'll
be

fine so the next question is from
Bon and Bon says if one was to live an
alternative Buddhist monastic life in
the west separate from any established

order wandering alone what if any sutas
would you recommend carrying on the
journey or studying diligently before
one was to leave I know this is
subjective to what the individual needs
but I would like your recommendation of
what you think you would have needed or
for someone of your temperament thank
you very much well the suata is really
um that was like my Bible with regard to
an introduction to early Buddhist
wandering and and aestheticism like uh
there's one Su I was going to look it up
and I forgot is the the Su on proper
wandering which would be a good one
that's it's in the Su it's not in the AA
a waga but it's obviously very old back

when monks weren't living in monasteries
they were just homeless Wanderers living
under trees and so
forth so that would
be my best I mean just read the early
texts and I mean the early text just
take it for granted that you're going to
be a homeless
Wanderer um and I mean the early really
early ones it's not so much you know
you're a member of this SAA I mean
you're just going like the Horn of the
rhinoceros you know the kaga Su also the
suan I mean read the
sutin that would be about the best book
you could

read for for this

purpose

so yeah I guess I answered that one so

I'll just move on to the next question

here I'm trying to keep this under three

hours I'm being

conscientious this next question is from

creel and creel said I heard that

spiritual progress May decrease the

effect of psychedelic drugs as perhaps

drugs get drugs kind get redundant if

not

counterproductive this could be an

interesting question then what is the

relationship between spiritual progress

or its opposite and the effect of

psychedelic drugs this can be hard to

answer where the individual is a monk as they cannot take drugs thank you well I mean as soon as I read this question I was immediately reminded of one of the most famous stories about NE karoli Baba up there on the altar the big black and white picture there and RAM do when he first went to India first met Nim Koli Baba or maharaji as he was known he he brought some highgrade like pharmaceutical grade LSD with him and he wanted to get like swamis to take this stuff and give him Dr Richard Albert at that time he wasn't Romos yet their opinion and so anyway he meets maharaji and maharaji has psychic powers and one

day maharaji says you got the Medicine
bring me the medicine and at first ramas
doesn't know what he's talking about but
uh somehow uh you know the communication
gap is resolved and he realizes that
maharaji knows that he's got LSD and he
wants him to bring it to him so he
brings the LSD

and maharaji says will it give me CS
which is like powers and in Translation
ramas didn't understand what CDs meant
so he just thought Powers what you think
it's like B12 it's going to make you
stronger or something you know he didn't
understand yet but
anyway um he had like three intact pills
that were 300 micrograms each and then

he had like a a half a pill or something
and so maharaji just took the three
unbroken pills

and he's asking him can I can I drink
water with it and RDA says yes and like
does it matter if it's warm water or
cold water and ramda says no it doesn't
matter and at one point maharaji asked
him will that make me crazy and ramda
said um

probably so anyway maharaji took three
300 microgram pills so there's 900
micrograms which is a mega dose really
more than most people would take and he
just sits there
and and he ask how long it'll take and

ramda says you know half an hour and you should start feeling something and you know every once in a while maharaji will just look he's got like this attendant with him he looks at the attendant to watch and he's just looking at that time and then after maybe an hour there seems to be nothing happening maharaji just takes his blanket he he always wore this blanket he kind of pulls it over his head and then he comes out with this like crazy crazy look on his face and ROM do is just thinking oh no you know just I've just given 900 micrograms to this old man and he's he's freaking out and then but it was just a joke and then because the next thing is maharaji's

just looking at the watch again and it was like no effect

whatsoever so Ram do goes he's called Ram do now he goes back to America and he's telling the story of of uh how maharaji took 900 micrograms of LSD and had no effect whatsoever and but still there was like this

sneaking doubt in his mind like well maybe he palmed them or you know maybe when I wasn't looking he just tossed them or something you know he didn't he wasn't 100% sure that maharaji really did take 900 micrograms of LSD and have no effect so next time he goes to India maharaji who of course as I say has

psychic powers he uh

said uh you remember when I took that
medicine don't you and M ramda said yes

and he said do you think I really took
him cuz because I mean he knew this

doubt in ramd Do's mind and then ramdas
said I think so so then maharaji says

bring me some more so this time maharaji
took four of the 300 microgram pills

1200

micrograms and he does it really

obviously because he knows Ram do has

these doubts he holds it out and he puts
it into his mouth just one after another

just makes it real obvious that he

really is taking the pills and again

there was no discernable effect

whatsoever and then afterwards Ram or maharaji says this this kind of medicine was known in the Kuru Valley you know centuries and centuries ago and uh it can be useful if you take it in cool weather in the natural surroundings when you're

alone and then that that was it that's as far as it went and I do think there's there's like a like a Goa trance group called 1200 micrograms I don't know if it's a group could just be one guy you know 12200 micrograms like watch shiva's India on on YouTube by 1200 micrograms and I assume they got I'm just guessing that they're named after

this maharaji taking 12200 micrograms of LSD and having no effect but that's just a convenient story I guess because uh I've pretty much forgotten the question that creel has asked here let's see this could be an interesting question then what is the relationship between spiritual progress or its opposite and the effect of psychedelic drugs I think that if you're fully enlightened you can take a Consciousness expanding drug and your mind is already fully expanded and it's just not going to have an effect like like the deal happened with with maharaji on the other hand um in the YouTube comments I did write this type in this little story of

this friend of mine who I mean he was just total Normie it seemed like just like he made Richie cunn ham seemed like a beatnik he was this guy was such a cleancut normal kind of a guy you know and he went to an iasa ceremony and he just did not get high on it at all and finally it's like the the shaman or the shaman was giving him like concentrated doses of this DMT stuff and it just had no effect on him at all and I was just teasing him just it's it's your whitebred karma that just won't let anything happen so I think it can vary I think a fully

enlightened being if they took a
Consciousness expanding drug their minds
are already fully expanded so it's not
going to be you know it's not going to
be a big deal for them I mean some other
kind of drug that has other effects it
you know it affects their body or
something sure that could happen and
just normies it's just going to be the
full spectrum some people will like
totally freak out other people have no
effect just because of their own Karma
and constitutional factors and so forth
so um also I would guess that the more
spiritual you are the more likely it is
going to be that taking psychedelic
drugs is going to cause like religious

experiences spiritual experiences
whereas normies are just going to like
laugh a lot or freak out or
whatever so I guess I'll just move on to
the next question here this is from mubo
and mubo says do you think the case
could be made that Zen despite the
centuries of separation from terraa and
its diverse cultural baggage from East
Asian Traditions is actually closer to
the radical skepticism of early Buddhism
well for starters I would say that early
Buddhism really was not skeptical I mean
in a way it was I mean it seemed like
skepticism just because the Buddhist
thing don't believe anything but a

skeptic is someone who who believes you cannot know reality you cannot know the truth Buddhism you you can know reality you can know the truth it's just that you're not going to know it through Concepts so that's that's the difference between like skepticism like ancient Greek skepticism like Puro and then you've got like Buddhism on the other hand but you set that aside I mean that's kind of a quibble and uh yeah I would say that Zen in certain ways does come very close to early early Buddhism just because they put so much less emphasis on dogmas I mean they still got quite a lot and then there's even pure land stuff

that has crept into a lot of Zen and so I mean it's not as pure as you'd read in a book I mean that was I was originally interested in Zen I really liked the idea of men dressed in black standing around talking in riddles and hitting each other with sticks I mean I just like the idea of that and then I I went to an actual Zen Monastery and there's all this bowing and chanting and all this sort of Mythology that gets added in and pure land Buddhism added in and I mean there was nobody was hitting each other with sticks at all so um yeah it's like the spirit of Zen if it's like in a relatively pure

setting you know with a a good Monastery
with a good Abbot a wise Abbot who gets
it you know then yeah I mean it's still
the outward forms would be different
because early Buddhism you just had
homeless Wanderers dressed in rags
begging for food in the streets whereas
you know even in a good Zen Monastery
you got you know that sort of regimented
and people living in the the Zeno and
you know they're still bowing and
chanting and so forth and so there are
differences but uh Zen has kind of tried
to conserve some of the most important
essence of of Buddhism so yeah I would
agree with
that yeah then Terra has lost a lot of

it this

because they had this idea that that

view meant wrong

view which left the door open to right

view which they were very carefully

formulating into this elaborate

Scholastic system which the Buddha

himself would not have endorsed because

he really did mean view when he said you

shouldn't have DT he didn't just mean

one of the 62 wrong views or 37 or

however many there are that you know in

like the Brahma jalo Su I don't remember

the exact number now it escapes me but

um yeah it's too bad really and I'll

just move on to the next question this

is from nature

cure and nature cure says which

Southeastern Asian Buddhist country

would you say is best for a foreign

beu

well it it all depends on exactly what

you're after what your priorities are I

guess because for me Burma worked really

well I was I was fortunate to have lived

in

Burma um I mean if you want like to be

in a group that you conform

to uh Thailand Thailand is more into

group Conformity or at least they make

it a policy like an explicit policy you

have to conform to the group whereas in

Burma Burmese people are so Conformity

oriented anyway that they don't they
never made a rule so that when some
crazy Wester like me comes along that
doesn't follow the rules they really
don't know how to deal with
it and I just noticed that this camera
is kind of
crooked yeah it's just gonna have to
stay that way because the thing that the
computer is standing on is slightly
crooked or mean maybe just the room is
slightly crooked maybe we can just blame
the
room so anyway Getting Back To Nature
Cure's question here which Southeastern
Asian Buddhist country would you say is

best re form because well if you say
Southeastern Asian then not rules out
Sri Lanka so you're really pretty much
just left with two which would be Burma
and

Thailand and it's just a matter of
personal taste whether you would prefer
Burma or Thailand Thailand it's easier
to get in you know it's more more of a
westernized country they have stricter
vinia in general there um more Danga or
just optional aesthetic practices in
Burma there's more scholarship and also
more
meditation and also like I said there's
less emphasis on you have to conform and
so you can just follow your own

conscience in Burma more easily than you can in Thailand although if you're a conspicuous Westerner you won't be able to just wander around freely like in populated areas if you want to wander around freely you're going to have to go out into a forest and take a lot of malaria medication with you so it's it's a matter of personal preference like whatever works best for you I guess you could also include other countries like Malaysia there are a number of terab Buddhist monasteries in Malaysia but it's a non- Buddhist culture it's mostly Asian as like ethnic Chinese people living in Malaysia that

support Buddhism because as I was saying earlier

ethnic Malaysians it is illegal for them to become Buddhists or even listen to a Buddhist

sermon um Bali in Indonesia there's a number of terraa Buddhist monasteries there there that's technically Indonesia is technically in Southeast Asia I really don't know what the situation in Cambodia or Laos is with regard to terab Buddhism but it's uh uh La I think is Marxist or it was for a long time so so that Buddhism would not have been endorsed and of course in Cambodia most of the monks were either just executed or um just forced to

disrobe and so um if you go to Cambodia
you're going to be finding a lot of like
Goa places and and like mahasi places
and stuff there so you might as well
just go to um

Burma if if you're after
mahasi

so let's see yeah I guess I answered
that I'll move on to Nature Cure's next
question here which is do you believe
Mahayana teachings can lead one to
achieve enlightenment yeah I think even
Christian teachings can lead one to
achieve enlightenment if one really has
the talent one has the parmy so to speak
um like I've said before I think St John

of the Cross may very well have been
fully
enlightened um maybe some
sufis you know I think like even some
Stone Age like an Eskimo Shaman may have
become fully enlightened just because
you know if you're ripe for it it's not
going to take much you know it might
just take one little
nudge so uh I do believe Mahayana
teachings can lead one to achieve
enlightenment especially if it's sort of
a Zen like or like prajna paramita or or
maamaa like the really profound stule
that can just blow your mind then it
still emphasizes meditation and so forth
that yeah I think it's possible Hinduism

also I do not think that terava Buddhism has a monopoly on enlightenment that is the official party party line that only I mean like just about anybody if they're a good person can get into heaven but that's still Samar you're still stuck but if you want to get completely off the wheel you want complete Enlightenment you've got to be a ter terab Buddhist that's that's the official party line and I just that's one of those things that I've just never really been able to believe I just I just can't buy it so I'll just move on to the next question from nature cure which is do

you believe vajana teachings can lead
one to achieve enlightenment um yeah I
mean like whoever composed the the
Tibetan book of the great Liberation was
obviously a very advanced person I
can't say if they were enlightened or
not but I think it's attributed to Padma
sambhava who I think he wasn't he
wasn't Tibetan but he was an Indian who
became like a missionary of advanced
Buddhist teachings in Tibet in like
early medieval times something like
that

um yeah like do do I believe vajana
teachings can lead one to achieve enlightenment
I think a Blow To The Head can lead one
to achieve enlightenment I mean such

there are stories of such things
happening that you know you just have
this Blow To The Head or like in uh
what's his name John Ren Lewis he got
poisoned in Thailand and had a near
death experience and he had this
Awakening experience um while he was
having a near-death experience from from
being poisoned so I mean if you're ripe
it doesn't take it doesn't take much of
a nudge to just push you over the
edge so yeah I am again I am skeptical
of the the Terra voden claim that terraa
has a monopoly on enlightenment and that
not only terraa has a monopoly on
enlightenment but terraa monasticism

because if you're not a monk and you somehow become enlightened you got to ordain within like 24 hours you're going to die in some karmic freak accident so I'll just move on to Nature cures next question

here is cannabis accessible for beus in Vermont

um maybe like in Shen state in Shan State it's up in the plateau of the like Eastern Burma and there's a lot of cannabis just grows wild there there fields of it and the people there um actually include it in certain recipes like there's some kind of chicken curry that has cannabis leaves in it I've never actually seen cannabis plants

growing in Burma but I've been told this
and um I used to live with this old monk
he was like a Subs a subsistence farmer
in a village up until he was in his 60s
I guess and then he ordained in his old
age as kind of a retirement plan and he
told me that he he lived in Shan state
for a while and he grew cannabis just
because some some Indian friend of his
gave him some seeds or something and he
said oh makes makes your head go who who
who that was funny this old this old
Burmese monk but for the most part yeah
it's not a mainstream thing it would be
kind of a secret
thing so um nature cures next question

here is it considered to be unethical to
other beus if one smokes cannabis for
the most part yeah Burma is a very
traditional conservative country and
they they view like an alcoholic pretty
much the same way we would view a junkie
or at least way junkies reviewed back in
the 80s and 90s back when there was
still a kind of social stigma on it like
I remember one of my main supporters her
her family like in a certain part of
Burma I lived in one of my main
supporters her family was disgraced
because her brother married the daughter
of a
fisherman and that's just a fisherman is
just low social status because they're

not good Buddhists because they kill
animals for a
living so getting back to uh cannabis
here yeah I've never heard of a monk um
just I mean they some monasteries I
assume especially in shann state where
cannabis is more
normalized um probably but in the
mainstream of Burmese culture is it's
just unheard
of so yeah they would think that you're
just taking an
intoxicant which for the most part you
would be I mean if you're doing it
recreationally then it's against the
rules

anyway it is allowable for a monk to take cannabis for medicinal purposes but if you're just taking it because you want to get high then you're breaking the rules and it would be unethical in that to that

extent at least to that extent so I'll just move on to the next question here and this is from Quick

quiz and quick quiz says do you believe the dolly Lama is an enlightened

being um proba probably not he had some very Advanced teachers and he probably had some parmy some momentum coming into this life but I rather doubt that he's an enlightened being I mean you can't really know for sure with regard to a

lot of stuff that's I mean it would be purely subjective to him and as I say as I've said before from a samsaric point of view from the context of this material or seemingly Material World Enlightenment might I mean it might not be even possible it's just just it's just sort of off the scale so I mean if Nirvana is off the scale and is not part of samsara how are you going to have an enlightened being living in samsara I mean so you should consider that an enlightened being is just uh kind of a paradox or an enigma like a [__] or something so I'll just move on to Quick

quiz's next question after uh confusing everyone with that one do you know about vajana secret tantric teachings that some chosen monks use alcohol and molest underage people for some spiritual gain well the molest part is uh I mean if it's done correctly according to the texts it wouldn't be molesting I mean that's just kind of a slur but uh yeah I mean in in in Tantra I mean that's Tantra is based on the idea that we are living in the Kali Yuga we're living in the Dark Age and saintliness is not nearly the option that it used to be and so they're trying to become enlightened or at least to make spiritual progress on the left hand

path which is while you're doing this
stuff that is
transgressive I mean you're just
converting it into spiritual Grist for
the mill and so they ceremonial
do the five M's I I read about this a
long time ago the five M's which is Mom
siiz meat matcha is fish Maja is
intoxicants Mauna is sex and then
there's a fifth one that starts with m
then I think they've lost what they use
like parched grain because I think
they've forgotten what it really was
sort of like Soma where it's just the
the true meaning of it was lost to the
majority over the centuries I think

might mean some kind of drug maybe even
marijuana although marijuana doesn't
start with an m in in

Sanskrit but uh I'm sure they can make
it work out somehow that it could start
with an

m maybe majja is just in toxicant it's
not necessarily just

alcohol so anyways they try to do this
mindfully without any kind of attachment
so they learn how to live in worldliness
and you know they're they're in the
world but not of the world

but I'm sure it has been abused and of
course the cynics who who view it from
the outside will say oh they're
molesting girls or whatever without

really understanding like the philosophy
behind Tantra and without having the
faith that there really are some sincere
practitioners who are trying to do it
correctly in accordance with the
principles of the
thing

so okay I'll just move on on to a quick
quiz's next question here sorry quick
quiz I almost called you nature
cure okay so quick quiz's next question
here could it be possible that the vaj
Rana sect is corrupted by Mara and some
other bad bad Davis from the heaven
realm

already well pretty much anything is

corrupted by Mara to the extent that
Mara can corrupt it assuming that Mara
exists and for those of you who are uh
ignorant of the existence of Mara he's
sort of like the Buddhist Devil he's
like the Lord of
samsara one difference he's got from the
Devil is that if he can't get you to be
bad he'll get you to be good because
even if you're in heaven you're you're
still stuck in s sorrow because heaven
is not an escape from some sorrow it's
just a higher level of
it so could it be possible the vajan
sect is corrupted by Maron some other
bad bad Davis from the heaven real
already well I used to know vajana

practitioner um and he was talking about how I mean it's one of the common practices is you're invoking the Davis and you're not just invoking the good Davis or the like the benevolent ones you're also invoking the wrathful deities and so there is some playing playing with fire in vajana and that's kind of the whole point of it again it's there's like T elements where you're taking all this worldly [__] and transmuting it into gold supposedly if you're doing it correctly and some people who can't do it right are going to get messed up by it including by maybe some bad bad

Davis so I'll just uh move on to Quick
quiz's next question here did Buddha
teach any tant likee
teachings well the closest the Buddha
came to T like teachings is like
pointing out the dangers of SE bamasa or
adhering to morality and
observances that I really I I think it's
very plausible very possible I won't say
like for sure but just reading like the
Ana waga which is one of the oldest
fragments of like archaic Buddhism still
in existence that he's saying you know
monks should not follow rules it's the
rules got added later this is before
ninia rules started you know taking hold
in songa you

just um I mean I mean if you're like
sincere in your desire to cultivate
spirituality and follow Dharma and so
forth you don't need rules essentially
rules are for troublemakers you know to
keep them keep them behaving
properly so yeah I think the warning
against rules you know saying that you
know people like whatever uh people
might blame a monk for or praise him for
he has no interest in any of that you
know he he does not get involved in that
sort of thing so that's kind of tantric
but I mean having sex and uh you know
taking drugs and that sort of thing yeah
that was that was not uh condoned I I

don't recall any place where it is
condoned in early polyc or in late polyc
for that matter also I guess it's okay
to eat meat so that would be kind of
tantric I

suppose so I'll just move on to Quick
quizzes next question did Buddha teach
any

Mantra and I do not think so I mean if
you read theim Maga and there's the list
of the 40

standard like meditation methods then
some of it has been turned into Mantra
like um just meditating on the virtues
of the Buddha which got converted into
you know uh

Edo etc etc which is you know the nine

qualities of the Buddha that you just
recite it as a mantra and then you
finish that and then you do one bead on
the on the
rosary so but it wasn't really intended
originally to be Mantra you're really
supposed to be reflecting on the virtues
of the Buddha not just reciting just like
repeating reciting this this poly you
know blah blah blah that even probably
most Buddhists who recite it don't even
know what it means entirely you know
it's just foreign language it's
poly
so yeah um there are no sutras that I
recall where the Buddha is specifically

teaching Mantra meditation although as I say some um some Mantra has been added partly through like the the recollection of the virtues of Buddha dhama and the Davis and so forth and also like in Thailand especially they do buddo or BH putto um as a kind of Mantra although I don't think that has any um any precedent in the sutas not that not that I'm aware of so I'll just move on to the next question this is from Dan and Dan says maybe you poob basa can walk me through this in enlightened beings cannot make Bad Karma and enlightened beings live a choiceless life is this because they have attained absolute

wisdom well enlightened beings just
don't make any kind of karma good or bad
they're just not making Karma
anymore and uh enlightened beings live a
choiceless life is this because they
have attained absolute wisdom well it
depends on how you look at it I assume
the Orthodox explanation is that in
their wisdom they just naturally do the
right thing so they don't really have to
make decisions
anymore I assume it actually if you want
to be really super Orthodox like in in
Abid dama they've got what Kia they've
they've invented this new kind of of
volition that an arahant has that

doesn't make volition that doesn't make
Karma called kiraito or like functional
Consciousness but it it's not mentioned
anywhere in the SU
and there's a very unorthodox
explanation that that I play with
sometimes that a fully enlightened being
it's like there's nobody there and so
their behavior is just going to be like
a mirror of the karma of the people
around them that it's going to be like a
projection of other people's Karma and
just their beliefs and expectations and
so forth like ramas said about Raji that
the better you got to know them the more
you realize there was just nobody there
then he was just like a mirror

reflecting your own Karma back at you so that would be another way that uh an enlightened being live a choiceless life and don't make any Karma because really there's nobody there anymore they're just sort of like a holographic projection in a sense so I'll just move on to the next question here this is from aat THU and aat th says not related with this video but by any chance have you been to Fort Lauderdale as a copia with burmes monk before you became a monk maybe least 30 or 40 years ago and no I've never been to I'd never been to Texas until I rode a train through it on

my way to South

Carolina so it it wasn't me and I'm not sure um the only Burmese monk I know of that lived in Texas or spent a lot of time in Texas was

Theus and when I was a young Monk and I mean before I was a monk I'd never heard of him and after I became a monk I did not have a high opinion of him because he did not follow vinia and just seem like a businessman that wore monks robes as a way of making more money I me he charges exorbitant fees to give domato talks for

example and so yeah I'm there is at least one Burmese Monastery in Texas possibly in Fort waterdale so I assume

that may be the monk but I was yeah I've
never been there I've never been to any
Buddhist monasteries in
Texas

[Music]

so I guess I'll just move on to the next
question then this is from dama
river and dhama river says if it is
desired aanda the songa May when I am
gone abolish the Lesser and minor rules
this is a quote from the digan Kaya
number 16 or the Maha
basuta the discourse on the final
passing away of the Buddha and dama
River says nobody knows this but if you
could guess in your honest personal

opinion which are the rules the Buddha was referring to well I mean this could all be an anachronism because in the early text the Buddha was saying you there shouldn't be rules and there are um indications that there really were no rules early on um for example one one there's one scene where a monk is asking the Buddha why did previous dispensations of previous Buddhist die out so quickly and the Buddha said it's because there they didn't have vinea rules and that you know it just lacked the structure and just kind of collapsed which does make sense but in a way that could be sort of a a justification for making vinea rules in fact the whole

purpose of the first first Council the
first great Council and you read the
story after the Buddha dies you know he
attains Parana the enlightened monks you
know they take it with equinity you know
they know that everything that has a
beaning also passes away but the
unenlightened monks you know they're sad
because their teacher has died and then
you've got this one old wise guy he's a
do twet he's a monk who ordained when he
was old hard to hard to admonish he's
just saying why all the long faces now
we don't have Master Goa telling us do
this don't do that anytime you know all
the time we can do whatever we want and

Mahākāśapa who was the leader of the S
after the Buddha died he was alarmed by
this in an enlightened way because he
was an arant and so he decided we need
to make a great Council to establish
rules so it could be that there were no
vinea rules until after the Buddha died
so that this whole statement it is if it
is desired and N the song of May when I
am gone abolish the Lesser and minor
rules that could just be an anachronism
but I mean if you read the the history
of the First
Council which was 500
arant they all had different ideas as to
what the Lesser and minor rules were in
fact some of these aans supposedly if we

are to trust the text believe that everything less than the four paraja rules would be lesser and minor which would mean that you know you could you can masturbate and fondle women and so forth which uh yeah I really don't think so but I mean if you want lesser and minor rules probably would be like Duca which is the the lowest the lowest um of of severity Dua and dubas there's only one dubas rule which is making a joke about Buddha DH and sa I think or else it's making a joke at somebody else's expense can't remember which well I mean that would be the safe

the safe guess is that it would be just the Duca offense which are this is the lowest category of offenses with regard to

severity so yeah it be a safe guess or it could just be the Lesser and minor rules are the ones that do not have any ethical yeah I mean you could argue that way that they're the ones that are just not moral rules that they're not immoral either they just don't have anything to do with morality like shaving your head I mean what's immoral about not shaving your head you know or wearing robes of a certain color I mean what's what's immoral about wearing a red robe even though it's against the rules that sort

of thing but I just think probably just
docas but the whole thing may be just a
academic because it could be an
anachronism so I'll just move on a next
question which is from tiggles can I get
a shout out

ah I'm kind of horse I can't yell very
loud right now once I've been talking
for two hours

straight so I'll just move on to the
next question here this is from EU Diva
why did Buddha forbid translating his
teachings into vidic Sanskrit well
that's kind of a misconception there's
um somebody asked there were two monks
that were like Brahman priests before

they were monks and they asked if they would be allowed to translate his teachings into Sanskrit verse which was just the standard way of conveying religious scripture in Ancient India was through Sanskrit

verse and he said no one should learn and study dhama in one's own language which in the the commentators say the poly commentators say when he said in one's own language they meant in his own language which is

poly so I mean it was just he considered to be kind of a stumbling block or an obstacle of teaching people when you're going to be translating his words into

um poetry in a language that most people
don't understand that in order for the
teachings to be accessible they should
be taught in the vernacular of wherever
they happen to

be which makes

sense so that got interpreted as a rule
against

translating um Buddhist teachings into
Sanskrit verse which of course happened
anyway so UD Diva's next question is in
that sense Sanskrit Sutra worshipping
mahays are bad and lost Buddhists

right well I

mean the the early ones who were

translating Buddhist texts into Sanskrit

were breaking a minor rule but I mean
it's not really evil this sort of
another one of those rules that really
is not
ethical it's not unethical either it's
just amoral just I mean it's not immoral
to translate a text into Sanskrit
poetry I mean it's just has nothing to
do with ethics really
so yeah I it'd be kind of an extreme
view to say that that mahayan are bad
and lost Buddhists most of the ones who
worship sutras are worshiping a Chinese
translation anyway you know it's like
what is it uh
oh what nii Ren is it the Nichi Ren and
the SOA gaki Buddhists who are

worshiping the the Lotus Sutra which is
like a a Sutra that was composed
hundreds of years after the time of the
Buddha and then got translated into
Chinese and then into
Japanese so yeah I think that they're
not even reading it in the in the
Sanskrit verse that was
forbidden
so yeah I know think that they're
necessarily bad and lost Buddhists just
because they have uh they have their
text in Sanskrit verse or were
originally in Sanskrit
verse they they got better reasons than
that some of them I mean some Mists are

bad and lost but it's not because of
that I mean when it gets to the point
like in nii Ren and SOA gak where the
whole religion seems to be uh reduced to
worshiping one book which probably the
Buddha did not

compose then yeah I mean you're you're
off the tracks but you're not
necessarily

evil so I'll just move on to uh UD

Diva's next question

here is it possible that Hindus fool the
early Mahayana Buddhists by giving them
vidic mixed up sutras in order to
pollute

Buddhism um I don't think so although in
the in the text it was like you know

Proto Hindu nadic priests who it was
their idea to translate the Buddhist
teachings into uh Sanskrit verse but uh
I don't think it was done by anti-
Buddhists in order to like Poison the
Well of of Buddhist

Dharma yeah I think it was just like an
Indian tradition that that uh sacred
scripture was in Sanskrit verse and so
in order to honor the texts and up to
the level of sacred scripture status
they got translated into Sanskrit verse
by some schools of

Buddhism is it was just more of an
Indian cultural thing than any kind of
conspiracy against Buddhists by non-

Buddhists probably in my opinion so I'll just move on to euu Diva's next question here all Mahayana gods and davidas are adopted or borrowed from Hindu Davis and gods in my personal view would you agree well most of them but not all of them like the main ones at first were um you know Saka king of Gods and mahab Brahma and so forth um I'm not sure of of the position of Mara I don't know if he's mentioned in any Hindu text so he might be a unique invention and then some of the the later Mahayana dvas are like they started off as bodh sat who got deified so like MRI I don't know if MRI or aalo kites Vara were originally Hindu deities or what uh was it

padmapani or or something like that I mean there's some of these Hindu or like Mahayana deities that are also buddhisvas that somehow I don't I'm not sure I don't know the Hindu Pantheon well enough especially the ancient Hindu Pantheon

to know if some of these obscure bodhisattvas originated you know you got prajnaparmita the goddess of of transcendental wisdom I'm not so sure that I mean she could be like a variation on some Hindu goddess but she herself was not originally a Hindu goddess I'm pretty sure and then you got like Hercules even he got conflated with I think it was

padmapani one of these these obscure mAh
on buddhis satas who are also a kind of
God so I mean the whole idea of Davis
was borrowed from you know the the
pre-existent uh spiritual traditions of
India so in that extent to that extent
you know the Buddhist Pantheon is just
sort of a A variation on the vidic
pantheon but I do think that especially
in Mahayana they were inventing new ones
um or just just somehow developing new
deities based on principles of Mahayana
Buddhism and also just um like
promoting bodh svas up into deity status
like manucher I don't know if there's
any precedent for manucher in in like
early

Hinduism so some of them but I think probably not all of them were derived or B borrowed from Hindu Davis so I'll just move on to the next question here this is from Crave

minerals and crave minerals says here's some idle ponderings but I can't help but to be

curious what happens to the personality of a person when they become enlightened arant all have different characters and personalities but an idea I've been toying with is what if one's personality is nothing but hindrances and defilements as I imagine could be the case with for example some murderers

manipulators or generally evil people
evil people could this enlightened
person then become something like a
blank slate a newborn baby or what well
again it's it's like you've got this
residual Karma but when you become
enlightened according to Orthodox theory
that it's like this Karma no longer has
any power over you I mean it's still you
still have preferences you still have
personality traits you know if you liked
a good joke before you were enlightened
there's a good chance you'll like a good
joke after you become enlightened if you
didn't like black licorice before you
were enlightened you're not going to
suddenly start eating black licorice

after you become enlightened I mean
maybe I mean like maharaji up there he
may have been fully enlightened he still
had certain foods that he liked better
than other Foods although he was will
you he was able to eat and damn near
anything including 12200 micrograms of
LSD so again it's it's it's impossible
to say what the personality of a fully
enlightened being is like subjectively
you can't put it into words they're it's
off the

scale but just from the point of view of
Orthodox terab you still have these
tendencies that are there you know the
Buddha had certain personality traits

you know he didn't like lots of noise
for example you know he'd get bothered
by squabbling monks and go off and stay
alone in the forest for a while that
kind of a thing did occasionally crack a
very dry sort of
joke at least if we can believe what the
textt

say so yeah they still have latent
Tendencies but um or not lat in
tendencies in the philosophical sense of
you know Karma just wait waiting for its
chance to to reach fruition or or
whatever but

uh

see

gosh as I imagine this is such a hard

question people ask me these questions
it's it's it's it's very difficult like
how can we say what the subjective
experience of like a Buddha would
be but I assume it wouldn't be that
different from like an ordinarily wise
person except that they're just not
identified with that anymore it's just
nature taking its course you know it's
still this latent residual Karma just
working itself out with the enlightened
being assuming that there's anybody
there at
all just I mean they're not attached
they're not identified it's just nature
taking its

course okay I maybe I answered that I don't think a fully enlightened being is going to become like a newborn baby though I mean he's well actually ramana Maharishi apparently was kind of like that when he had his Awakening experience he was a Hindu so if you don't think Hindus can get enlightened you can just disregard this but yeah I mean it took him a long time before he was able to even start talking again just because you know he's in this totally different realm that's off the charts and he it took him years before he was able to kind of integrate being a human being functioning in samsara with this this higher knowledge it's just off the

charts just off the

map so maybe in some cases but um if we

can trust the books it's certainly not

in all cases so I'll just move on to the

next question

here and this is from Mr researcher and

he asked this question on question

answer number eight but he asked it

recently so he says is it in chime with

burmes politics and Buddhism if we don't

like the cultural marxists as you often

call them Burmese politics and Buddhism

we don't like culture well Burmese

politics I mean like the the ruling

party which is pretty much still um the

Army nowadays um yeah they don't like

cultural Marxist because cultural
marxists are just making trouble for
them you know they want Burma to stay a
traditional Burmese Buddhist country and
the cultural marxists who are mainly
like operating like

NOS are trying to encourage them to just
you need to be you know accepting to you
know homosexuality and

women in power and like Muslims you know
settling in your country and so forth

and uh you know diversity is our

strength and all that and the Burmese

Army really doesn't have much use for

that in fact the average Burmese

villager or the average devout Burmese

Buddhist has no use for cultural Marxism

they're very hard-headed

people and they're not just going to

throw away what they cherish as a

Priceless treasure in order to adopt

this this new point of view that is

sweeping across the the westernized

parts of the world which is most parts

of the

world or or even just pollute Buddhism

by mixing it all in like most western

Buddhists are doing

now

so yeah I mean Buddhism you don't like

cultural Marxism in Buddhism I mean some

parts of of cultural Marxism are fine

with Buddhism like you don't want to be

against anybody you don't want to hate anybody so I mean you meet a transsexual person I mean just if you're going to judge them at all judge them on the you know the merits of their own character rather than the fact that they're a transsexual for example or a homosexual or a member of certain ethnicities or whatever but with regard to one of the basic teachings of cultural Marxism is the ex virtually the exact opposite of dhama which is if you're unhappy it's somebody else's fault especially

Whitey you know that I mean that's just ridiculous you know I mean cultural marxists will just say oh victim blaming

you you can't blame you can't blame the
poor black guy because you know he he
steals you know it's White's fault it's
it's because his F his his ancestors
were enslaved and on and on and that's
just not Buddhism at all even though you
got people talking about this in
Buddhist d mahals in the west taking it
seriously and actually thinking that
it's dhama when actually it's the
opposite of dhamma if you're unhappy
it's your own doing you know it's your
own
choice you know it's your own clinging
and attachment that is causing the
unhappiness it's not what somebody else

out there in the world is doing it's not
somebody calling you by the wrong
pronoun that's making you unhappy it's
your dysfunctional attitude that insists
on being called by the right pronoun
so I mean some parts of cultural Marxism
are not in conflict with Buddhism and
some parts are just radically Divergent
from Buddhism so and the burmes in
general have very little use for
cultural Marxism you when I was in Burma
it I I left shortly after Burma opened
up to the West which is around 2011 and
you just have this flood of like white
people coming in to like look for ways
to make make quick money or you had the
NOS coming in and like the board wives

of the leaders of the NOS would be like trying to teach feminism to the Burmese ladies and it's like you have these messed up unhappy Western women trying to teach these well adjusted Burmese women to be as messed up and unhappy as they are you know you should be demanding your rights and and and on and on and I don't know what got me going on that oh yeah cultural Marxism in Burma so anyways just going to move on to the next question here this is from keep theia and keep theia says oh when I when I win that that wasn't because I have any uh dislike of keep DN or his

questions it's just that I've been
talking non-stop for over two hours
here so keep dnial says how do we know
that the Buddha was enlightened well the
easy answer is we don't you don't know
that anybody is enlightened you can't
just look at somebody know that they're
enlightened maybe one enlightened person
person can know that another person's un
enlightened but you can't understand or
comprehend anything higher than yourself
which is one reason why people have such
men

mundane explanations of of gods and
angels and so forth you know you read
the Old Testament and God's just an
angry old man with with

superpowers it's because you've got people who are a kind of upgraded ape trying to imagine what uh like the Supreme Being is going to be like or even a much higher being and they can't because it's just beyond their comprehension and furthermore I mean enlightened being here in this world may just I mean it's may be a contradiction in

terms so we don't know that the Buddha wasn't light and for a Buddhist it is a very convenient working

hypothesis and at the very least he was an extremely wise person so I'll just move on to keep the Winnie's next

question here why do you think Buddhism is superior to other religions well it's Superior uh for me just because it's based largely on empiricism and you don't have to believe any narratives you don't have to believe any stories you don't have to believe any fairy tales that and some religions including Christianity you have to believe this narrative you have to believe that Jesus was the only begotten Son of God who died for our sins for example and I mean you don't have to believe that kind of stuff in Buddhism I mean there is a lot of stuff that you know it's it's useful to believe but a

lot of it's empirical like the four noble truths first Noble Truth is pretty self-evident if you look second Noble Truth is also pretty self-evident if you look third Noble Truth is just a logical consequence or a logical it's derived logically from the second Noble Truth if the second Noble Truth is true then the third Noble Truth logically has to be true and then the fourth Noble Truth The Noble eight-fold Path um well at least you can learn through practicing it whether you're making progress or not but for some people I mean they might be very Faith oriented or something that some other system than

terraa Buddhism may work better for them
I mean some people might actually do
better as Christians than as Buddhists
for some reason just due to personality
traits constitutional factors and
somewhat some such I meant to say
okay

so I was going to say something else
right after that too and then I said the
wrong word which caused me to correct
myself and then I took a drink of this
delicious nectar that I am consuming and
I forgot what I was gonna
say do I think that Buddhism is superior
to other religions
um it depends on the context I mean any
kind of Superior or inferior argument is

going to be a value judgment I mean
Superior or inferior they rely on
context I mean I had one person recently
trying to call me a uh a racist who
thinks One race is superior to another
race and I'm like Superior I mean when
have I ever said that I it's like with
regard to what with to what's the
context and really that's I mean
Superior I mean Super you have to say if
you're going to say something something
is superior you have to say you know in
what way I mean I mean do I think that
Buddhism is superior with regard to its
ability to get people enlightened I'm
not so sure about that or especially

like terraa

Buddhism um terraa Buddhism has become so dogmatic that in a way that's sort of an obstacle to Enlightenment if people are really that dogmatic you know they're clinging to these teachings some of which are not authentic teachings of the Buddha in my opinion then yeah and uh I've said before that I would not be surprised if there have been more enlightened Hindus than enlightened terraa

Buddhists partly because Hinduism is more wide open it's not so constricting with regard to what you have to believe so for some people Buddhism is

superior to other religions and I think
in general it's one of the
best possibly the best but that's just
my

opinion so next question from keep the
vinia suppose someone asks me why I am a
Buddhist do you think it is a good
answer that I believe in Buddhism
because no other religion has such a
logical Foundation because the four
noble truths are the most logical and
disputable Foundation a religion can
have um logic itself is not no
indication of of Truth like n his
philosophy is pretty logical and
self-consistent but that doesn't mean n

was

right so logic I mean it's better to to

say it's more

empirical maybe more

objective which I think might be true

and it's not just the for Noble Truths

it's you know the three marks of

existence and just the efficacy of the

like mindfulness and so forth the

efficacy of the meditation techniques

and the practices I mean that's even

more important than the underlying

philosophy is does the practice you know

give may give you make you have

spiritual

progress or help you to have spiritual

progress or at least not get in the way

of

it

so I mean if a good answer would be the
true answer I mean why do you believe in
Buddhism I mean it would have to it
would depend upon

you so

but for me I wouldn't say I think

Buddhism is I'm not a Buddhist because

Buddhism is more logical I mean in to a
large extent it is but that's not really

why I'm I'm Buddhist I mean if if I was

a Buddhist just because it was logical I

mean I'd be a logician that would be

even

better but uh yeah it's empirical and

objective I think that would be good and
it just works I mean that's that would
be the the proof of the the pudding
there is in the eating you know I mean
it just
works I mean might not necessarily work
in getting everybody enlightened but
most people don't even want to be
enlightened so I mean it gets you as far
as you want to get really deep down if
you don't get any you don't get very far
one of the reasons may be that you just
don't want to get very far deep down you
don't want to lose your identity or
something cuz that's that happens a lot
people start meditating and they start
getting scared and want to stop

meditating because their their ego
starts to dissolve or something but also
it just may be that some people are just
more irrational more heart feelings
oriented and so forth so more devotional
like a buck to yoga kind of a thing
might actually work better for
them so we'll just move on to uh keep
theia's next

question which is the goal in Buddhism
is to leave the painful cycle of
reincarnation

but why did the Buddha never actually
draw the simple conclusion of not
bringing another life into the world
where there is no life there are no

desires and if there are no desires
there is no suffering well I mean some
of the theic brahans used to say that
the Buddha was a destroyer of life
because he was advocating celibacy at
least for the his more serious
followers um and with regard to the
people that aren't his serious followers
why would he Advocate C y for normal
people living in a village I mean in in
Ancient India I mean if you were if you
were a lay person your children were
your Social Security there were no
pension plans in those days there was no
social security no Medicare anything
like that it was your kids would support
you when you got

old so yeah I mean he he he was a
sensible person I mean he advocated
celibacy you know not raising a family
for the people that really were keen on
becoming enlightened In This Very life
but for the people who just wanted a
some peace of mind some happiness you
know he wasn't going to say well you got
to be

celibate because I mean that's a very
strong desire for most people most
people just can't be Cel of it it's not
for everybody so the Buddha was wise and
he knew what was going to fly and what
wasn't going to fly he wasn't insisting
on not killing animals for meat he

didn't insist on not having Wars he
could point out that you know causes
suffering and that's not good for you to
do

it and I mean he pointed out sensual
Pleasures especially sex is you know
it's you know it's it's as much trouble
as it's worth at

least but I mean he's not just gonna go
around telling everyone they got to stop
having kids I mean that I mean that
would just be silly it would just make
him less influential and less able to
help

people so I guess I'll just move on to
the next question here also from keep
the vinia and remember the new rule is

no more than four questions

each and it might go down to three let's

call it three plus a free bonus

question so the next question here is

what are your thoughts on the following

quote of

schopenhauer which is as follows if life

the craving for which is the very

essence of our being or possessed of any

positive intrinsic value there would be

no such thing as boredom at all mere

existence would satisfy us in itself and

we should want for nothing

unquote well yeah I can agree with that

I suppose I mean if if life were

possessed of any positive intrinsic

value um I mean still you could say that even if something is possessed of some intrinsic value that doesn't mean that it's never going to be burdensome to you but uh yeah in general I I agree with that I mean especially the first part where it says that life the craving for which is the very essence of our being yeah that's schopenhauer's will right

there but uh yeah overall I pretty much agree with that it's uh I mean it's not entirely a logical conclusive statement you know he's not really proving anything but you know it's it's an interesting idea and largely true I think so I'll just move move on to the

next question which is uh from Cool Whip and there's a lot of explanatory essay that accompanies this question which can be viewed if one reads the comments to the previous Q&A video um from Cool Whip I do like how the whole thing begins though which is dear master of

eclecticism and the question that is embedded in the essay is how does one not fall into deep depression living in a worldly life according to truths Buddhism teaches and he says here the World Health Organization defines depression as lack of Interest or pleasure in previously rewarding or

enjoyable

activities well I wouldn't Define

depression as that I would Define

depression as just like a contraction of
of one's

Consciousness um but what what the World
Health Organization defines as

depression would be probably

nebida it's uh it's niida in p means

like disillusionment

disenchantment and that's um I mean

that's that's a good thing to experience

in Buddhism because ni leads to WEA

which is dispassion you know first

you're just fed up you know you just

you're just sick and tired of all this

samsaric [__] you know that's niida

that leads to iraga or dispassion you
know you just stop having desires and
attachments for all this which then
leads to weoka which is

Liberation so it's the first step
towards Liberation which

uh which is good I mean you're calling
it deep

depression living a worldly life

according to the I mean if I mean if if
you have this amount of disillusion

disillusionment that it is causing a

deep depression then this pretty much of
an indication that you're either going

to have to stop being a a believing

Buddhist or you're going to have to

start taking it more seriously and like
renounce the world and really start
practicing dhamma at a higher
level so because I mean what you're
calling deep depression at least what
the World Health Organization is calling
deep depression is essentially neida
which is the first step towards
Enlightenment at least in that series of
nebida leads to iraga which leads to
weoka so we'll just move on to uh cool
Whip's next question here and Cool Whip
also has the Alias of the sacrilegious
void

Cool Whip AKA The sacriligious V
sacriligious void also says here why
does terab Buddhism not have a monopoly

on enlightenment today what are
alternative methods you can think of
different to sa batana weasa that lead
to Nana yoga and the Hindus seem to
practice only

shamata won't any conceptual fabrication
pja like concept of God philosophy or
science get in the way of true
experiential insight therefore must be
abandoned could psychedelics or other
brain interventions for example
neuralink give a glimpse into nibana or
are these religions religious
experiences of bliss and Clarity
illusory well it looks like he's snuck
in another question here I'm going to

separate

these okay so first question why does
terraa Buddhism not have a monopoly on
enlightenment today what I mean this
this is all these questions so many
question marks here what are the alter
native methods you can think of does s
batan Lead to Nana well like I said St
John of the Cross may have been fully
enlightened and they have their like the
discal carites the contemplative order
of the discal carites um they've got
their own equivalent to mindfulness
which they call recollection which is
kind of like kind of strange because
sedit or mindfulness also means
recollection so they may have come up

with that independently of each other
which is kind of strange to
me but uh like I was saying earlier the
Hindus and their their idea of aśis were
anything that you have desire for avoid
it I mean that is a powerful practice
it's a very difficult practice it can be
very painful practice but it's a very
powerful

one and then just Detachment in
general like you just doing the chance
and doing the chance and doing the
chance like some of the Hindus do or the
Mantra over and over again until finally
you're just kind of detached from it
it's just going on on its

own and then you're aware of this you
have Insight arise from
that so yoga and the Hindus seem to
practice only shamat that's I think
that's a misconception they don't put as
much emphasis on it because they have
kind of other ways of going about it
just like um like I said just the the
whole self-denial thing that requires a
fair amount of mindfulness right there
just to be aware of your own desires
just so you can like stymie them you know
just not do them [__] block them so to
speak and then here another question
included in this little cluster of
questions won't any conceptual
fabrication papancha like concept of God

philosophy or science get in the way of
true experiential Insight therefore must
be abandoned yeah but you have to think
something so long as you're not
enlightened yet and thinking about Karma
and Buddha and and that kind of thing is
still more thinking

so I mean the concepts eventually become
irrelevant once you detach from them you
know it's just the mind just nature
taking its course just this blah blah
blah that just incessantly goes on
because that's what your brain's
function is just it's like your heart's
function is to pump blood and me it's
just going to keep going and so you just

have to detach from

that okay so I guess I answered that

question and I really am keen on not not

lasting three hours answering all these

questions so the second part of that

question was could psychedelics or other

brain interventions for example

neuralink give a glimpse into nibana

where are these religious experiences of

bliss and Clarity illusory well it

depends on your own Karma I mean they

can serve at least the the psychedelics

can serve as a kind of uh karmic gimmick

to give you access to something you

didn't have access to before which then

gives you a new sense of perspective you

know it's like at least it's showing you

that there are other ways of looking at reality that are at least as valid as the usual waking state for a norming and with regard to neuralink um yeah you'd have to have like enlightened like programmers and Engineers designing it to do that I suppose unless there's some weird glitch like the blow to the head that can also cause some people to have their Awakening experience or so I have read so I'll just move on to the next question here is Elon musk's philosophy or vision of Conquering the universe through science and engineering so one day we can ask the right questions

compatible with Buddhism where is this
roaming endlessly in samsara it's
roaming endlessly in
samsara yeah that's what it is it's it's
samsaric you know you're trying to use
samsaric means to transcend samsara to
some degree you can do it but it's got
to be through Paradox and and and just
sort of using using our thinking just
liberating ourselves from our Thinking
by means of our thinking it's not a
matter of asking the right questions
it's just realizing that there are no
right questions with regard to that
other than you know what do I need to
do so yeah Elon Musk seems to be sort of
like a scientific realist in in this

description of his attitude and I mean
from a point view of a scientific
realist this is reality samsara is the
only reality there is there is no
Enlightenment or if there is
Enlightenment it's just a psychological
like a samsaric psychological state so it's
not really Enlightenment at
all so I think I'll just move on to the
next question

from Cool

Whip you expressed fear of transhumanism
but I don't recall a discussion on
whether transhumanism M could be an
Enlightenment machine or a technological
sopona Factory you are predominantly

terot of Buddhist but do you have time
for ideas like Lee smolin's the life of
the cosmos or the autodidactic universe
to name some examples of a possible
theological nature of the universe
ascribing some higher purpose to the
direction of the universe currently
irrefutable and maybe discoverable by
Science and

Mathematics what well I do not think the
universe has any theological purpose
anyone familiar with my theory of
everything you know the simil of the
block of marble I mean the universe is
already absolute it I mean I mean I'm
not talking about the the cosmological
or astronomical Universe I'm just

talking about everything just everything
you know it's already
infinite I mean there's no improvement
is possible I mean you can call you can
say you can improve yourself you can
improve some vers of reality you know
some closed system with within the saric
illusion but it's not going to change
Ultimate Reality at all not not one iota
not one angstrom
unit so I mean a lot of a lot of
teachers Dharma teachers or spiritual
teachers will say you know it's like our
our souls or our Spirits have
voluntarily entered this world so that
we can we can like you know you know

that the absolute can learn to know
itself Through The Eyes of another or
you know this kind of a thing yeah I
don't I don't buy it at
all this is just a kind of dream and
it's it's not helping
anything so I don't do I have times for
ideas like Lee smen's life yeah I've
never read anything by Lee
smolen let's see to name some examples
of a possible te possible theological
nature of the universe ascribing some
higher purpose to the direction yeah
there
is no I do not think there is any
teologicos to
samor so and for it to be discoverable

by Science and Mathematics now you need to read some K I think in his critique of science you know it's like no scientific evidence you know no kind of empirical scientific evidence or theory is going to get anyone even one inch closer to understanding the thing in itself the thing in itself is just off the scale you cannot use Som saric means to know

it you know it's like a character in a book trying to understand the author within the context of the book so I guess I'll just move on to next question here this is from John and John says do you have any book

recommendations on the subject of
buddhism's decline due to Islamic
Invasion I've never read an entire book
on the subject of buddhism's Decline and
just virtual Extinction in India due to
the Islamic Invasion although um a lot
of what I know about it comes from this
book by AK water Indian Buddhism try and
hold it so the glare from the light
doesn't mess it up right there Indian
Buddhism in the last chapter has the
last section of the last chapter is
called the spirit of decline I think
yeah the spirit of destruction and it's
uh talking about how um you know the
Muslims just swept in and were just
essentially massacring entire

monasteries and that's no that's no
exaggeration it's he uses the Muslim
sources themselves where they're
bragging about having massacred entire
monasteries so and I haven't read this
book in a few years but uh I think he's
probably explaining how just having
Muslims killing off monks in in
wiping out Buddhist universities and so
forth caused just the the collapse of
Buddhism because Buddhism in Northern
India or throughout most of India at
that time was becoming very it was based
on like Scholastic
monasteries and when those collapsed you
know sort of like uh what happened with

Thailand when the Burmese invaded
Thailand back when it was called sayam
back when Audia was the capital it just
caused a collapse of their
ecclesiastical structure which and it
never really fully recovered and this
was few hundred years ago except in
India it was even worse because um the
Burmese weren't like systematically just
sweeping through and wiping out every
Monastery they
found so yeah I mean that would this
book by AK water Indian Indian Buddhism
would be uh I mean at least the end part
of it it's uh it's the only book on my
bookcase that really discusses the
topic so I'll just move on to the next

question and this is from you know I'm
wi it and you know I'm wi it says I work
for the forest service with two chicks
who identify as they them and police
other people's use of language to
protect their fragile
worldviews upon meeting my crew we were
asked to say our names and
pronouns we all have views unique to our
conditioning and comma but I feel like
there are infinite ways of connecting
with people in the workplace without
having them adhere to your opinions have
you been associated with anyone who has
gender dysphoria in the US I'm curious
if someone's ever asked you what your

pronouns are um I've never actually
um had any kind of real
interpersonal interaction with a
transsexual here in the US there was a
few in Burma where it's it's in some
ways it's more common at least it's it's
more mainstream you know it's more
acceptable to conservatives in Burma
just because of their belief in karma
and rebirth and transition from male to
female over a series of births and so
forth

um but I'm curious if someone's ever
asked me what my pronouns are not to my
face I mean sometimes you're filling out
a form or something and it'll ask what
your pronouns are or if it's male gender

or non-binary or whatever that kind of
thing I've seen but um yeah if somebody
were ask me what my pronouns are I'd
just i' just be like are you
kidding are you

joking I'll just let them guess you can
just let them figure it out for
themselves

so I'll just move on to the next
question here from you know I'm with it
what are your views on the border crisis
in Southern Arizona you have
humanitarian and Aid groups like no more
deaths fully staffed by Deep leftist
Marxist types who go out and Supply
water to dying immigrants crossing over

the border is this an instant of mixed
comma well I've already worn The Fez
from majamaa since we're talking about
Arizona I'll we this
one okay what are my views on the border
crisis in Southern Arizona well it's
it's it's complete artificial crisis
created largely by the government
because they want illegal aliens and
it's like the ruling Elites of both
parties you know you got the dying out
ruling Elites of the conservative party
who are being replaced by
populists and then you've got you know
the the Neo liberals and also some fair
amount of like commies on in the
Democratic party you know they want

illegal immigrants for different reasons
you know it's like the old Neo conserv
or you know the neocons you know they
just wanted cheap
labor whereas the left they want just
like a voting block voting for more
socialist
handouts
so that's pretty much my view on the
border crisis in Southern Arizona I it's
like people who don't give a sh [_]
about the prosperity of America they
think the prosperity of America is some
kind of a front to the world or they
just are in a state of denial with
regard to what actually causes

prosperity and it's certainly not
diversity I mean history shows that
again and
again so let's see humanitarian Aid
groups like No More Death fully staffed
uh who go out and Supply water to dying
immigrants crossing the border is this
an incident of mixed comma well I mean
there's nothing wrong with giving water
to somebody dying of thirst even if
they're a criminal you know from a
Buddhist point of view you got somebody
you know they walked 2,000 miles to
illegally enter this country just
because you know it's just everyone
knows that President Biden loves illegal
aliens he's not going to do anything he

gives them free phones and stuff you
know he gives them money why not I mean
you can make more money living on
welfare in America than you can by
hering goats in
Honduras why
not so they come up here cross the
border illegally making them
criminals and uh but they're they're
dying of thirst and so somebody gives
them a drink of water I mean yeah
there's nothing wrong with with that
sort of thing helping people in need I
guess but um yeah I in if it's also that
they want to just bring down haidi in in
the USA if that's their motivation for

being there in the first place you know
if their motivation is just they want to
alleviate suffering then that's one
thing if their motivation for being
there is you know to bring down Hai to
bring down the evil colonialist USA you
know and American imperialism and all
that then yeah that's negative so yeah
it would be mixed comma but then again
everything is mixed comma pretty much
anything that we do is mixed Karma
because there's always going to be a
certain amount of delusion so long as
we're unenlightened you know there's
going to be a certain amount of desire
and delusion involved so you're never
going to have pure Good Karma never

there's there's no such thing as pure
100% Good Karma there's always going to
be a shade of gray there's always going
to be um you know some bad karma mixed
in with it but this would be if I mean
this could be sort of one of those 5050
cases where you know you're you're
trying to destroy America by helping
unfortunate people dying up thirst who
are entering the country
illegally so yeah that would be a mixed
Karma

thing but U pretty much all karma is
mixed Karma so I'll just move on to the
next question
here which is from

[Music]

om and om well I said it wrong that time
and oh well I didn't say it quite right
that time either this is
difficult anyway

oh says is concept of Merit somehow in
the sutas I don't really understand how
giving food to a hungry child is less
Merit than to sloppy fatty monk for me
it has the same level of level of
absurdity as this sentence instead of
Conventional Weapons the Chinese
military is training to shout bad
pronouns at American soldiers well in a
few another decade or so if things
continue as they are that could just
completely destroy American soldiers if

they call them by the wrong pronouns but
um yeah there is the concept of Merit or
just the effects of your meritorious
Deeds I mean the word for merit in poly
is Puna p u NN a so I mean it's got a
word for it it's translated as Merit and
uh yeah there's a famous Su where it's
talking about like the Merit from
feeding somebody or making an offering
to somebody like you feed an animal
according to this suta you're going to
get benefit for a hundred lifetimes and
if you feed like a a bad person that's
like a thousand lifetimes and you feed
to a good person you know it keeps going
up and up then you've got like the bad

Monk and you've got the the
conscientious monk then You' got like
the enlightened Monk and at the very top
I'm pretty sure even higher than
offering to a Buddha is just offering to
the song of the four quarters and to
some degree this is like propaganda
promoting you know offering stuff to
monks you know which is composed by
monks presumably unless it's composed by
the Buddha you know maybe the Buddha
really said it but um you know there's
an awful lot of stuff in the poly texts
emphasizing that you're going to get
really good Merit for offering stuff to
monks and monks really pound away at
this in Burma they just pound away at a

big time so that lay people are just conditioned that they want Merit they are offer stuff to monks which is convenient for the monks I have to admit I was never really wanting for anything because they thought they were going to get big Karma big Good Karma by supporting me because you know I was like living in a cave and didn't handle money I meditated you know

so yeah there are sutras discussing that very principle and like if you dis a Buddha or you you you like show flagrant disrespect for an enlightened being yeah you're in big trouble way more trouble

than if you you express flagrant
disrespect for a
dog you know like there's one the caica
Su I think there was this monk caica who
was badmouthing I think it was saruta
and molana to the Buddha he's saying you
know they've got you know they're
crooked you know they're not good monks
and the Buddha is warning him don't say
that and he just keeps up with it and
then as he walks away he just he just
breaks out in these sores that gradually
get bigger and bigger and bigger until
they break and then he just
dies as a result of dissing an arant or
in this case two aans but
um yeah it wouldn't happen if he was

dissing a dog or just a foolish person
likewise there's one story of I think it
was a Pacha Buddha going for alms and
there was this rich man who had some
leftovers from from some meal or
something and he has the servant let's
go out and offer it to this this peka
Buddha and then afterwards as the Pacha
Buddha is walking away he feels regret
or remorse it's like I could have just
fed that to the servants so because he
he offered food to this Pacha Buddha oh
should take the hat off I
guess so after he offers this food to
the peka Buddha oh because he does um he
goes to heaven for a zillion gajillion

years but because he regretted it
afterwards he also had to go to hell for
a zillion gajillion years just for this
one little act with regard to a PAB
Buddha so with regard to like Saints
fully enlightened beings you got to be
real careful like you know I would
hesitate to just say someone's you know
someone who you know has a reputation
for saintliness is just a fraud you know
they're a child molester or something I
mean if you had proof of it that's one
thing but still um you know I wouldn't
just around slurs towards uh reputedly
wise
people but yeah getting back to the
question of oh it's uh yeah I mean the

concept of Merit or

Puna or is it

Puna oh man I'm getting real Rusty in my
poly

Puna

yeah yeah Puna that's it so yeah so the
concept is there yeah and there's

there's a lot of stress on it so I'll

just move on to the next question which
is the very last question so we are

keeping it less than three hours and

remember no more than four questions per
person next time this is from Mama and

mama says do dogs have karma for example
spoiled Western dogs and Asian and

African Street dogs and the answer is

yes any conscious sentient being with a mind is going to have going to make Karma and experience the results of Karma and uh you know according to Buddhism you can be reborn as an animal under certain circumstances animals um you know they go up or down there's like a a frog that went to heaven some famous case of a frog that went to heaven so um yeah it wouldn't be able to go to heaven if it didn't have Karma would it so yeah I mean they've got simpler Karma than we do because we're more complicated than they do but yeah and uh usually the the karma of animals is very animalistic and so they' stay stuck at the animal level for a long time but still it's pretty

obvious that

some Shih Tzu that that lives a good life and eats lots of raw meat and so forth you know living in a comfy house and goes to the vet sometimes and goes to the groomer to get shampooed and blowdried and everything that you know they're living a better life than some mangy Ur in in Southeast Asia and that's because of

karma so yeah dogs have Karma any any kind of being that has

volitions any kind of being that has will or Cheta is making

Karma and it may be simpler Karma or even more complicated Karma if you're if

you're like above the human level but
yeah it's it's still there and uh
schopenhauer would probably you even go
so far as to say that even like
inanimate matter would have a kind of
karma because it's will that is causing
it to
exist so I answered all the questions by
golly and it's less than three hours
through some astonishing
miracle and uh yeah so if you have any
questions feel free to ask them no more
than four please and
uh just leave them in the the comments
below and uh click the like button if
you haven't already and subscribe if you
haven't already and read the URL links

if you haven't already including the
little advertisements for my books and
be
happy

hello and welcome to episode 72 of
question and answer I am your host poo
basa and I'm feeling kind of viracy
today I just woke up feeling viracy and
my head feels sort of inflated like a
beach ball and my mind is not entirely
clear

but the show must go
on and we've got lots of questions not
as many as last time but still I think
it would qualify as a Merc onslaught of
questions and I think we may have to
reduce the number
again of questions that each person can
ask per per episode so let's let's go
with three three shall be the number of

the

count so uh I guess I should just Wade

right into this because as I say

merciless onslaught of questions not

that I'm complaining at all that that's

why we're here right you're you ask

questions and I do my best to answer

them so let us proceed shall

we the first question is from

Joseph and Joseph says hello any chance

that all religious beliefs are just the

stories that early man and woman created

themselves to allay fears of the unknown

that these stories have become this

planet's

religions well I mean he even has the

all religious beliefs the all is in

capitals all religious beliefs are just the stories that early man and woman created themselves to aay fears of the unknown and I do think that that's one of the main reasons for religion to arise like early religions it was sort of animism and it was people trying to understand the world that they live in their place in the world um in order to not feel so insecure you know to be able to predict to some degree or at least explain to some degree what's happening so like very early religions you know you've got Thunder in the sky that's because you know God so and so is throwing a hammer or throwing

Thunderbolts or or whatever it is you
know if if there's a disease it's caused
by such and such deity being unhappy
because somebody peed on the secret Hill
or some

such and I mean that kind of insecurity
with the unknown exists in us to this
day but now we have science and science
has pretty much the same purpose as
these narratives in prehistoric times
about you know everything you know the
seasons and day and night and pregnancy
and sickness and thunder and all this
you know rain or drought or whatever
it's all caused by some anthropomorphic
deity pretty much some great spirit out
there somewhere generally up

upwards and you know they've got their own reasons and best we can do is try to second guess them so that we can avoid them causing the bad stuff maybe make offerings to them but I do not think that nowadays all religious beliefs are just stories to allay fears of the unknown like the four noble truths it's it's pretty obviously true at least the first three are pretty self-evident if one looks into the matter

so yeah I don't think I mean something like maamaa philosophy or early Buddhism I mean in a way it increases the unknown because it asserts that no narrative is

going to really be true

it's not going to be entirely

valid so that may be how religions

started but it doesn't apply to all

religious beliefs

nowadays and so I'll just move on to the

next question because we've got

approximately 50 questions this time and

this is from

Toronto and Toronto says bon bon

gunaratana states that light use of

alcohol does not constitute a violation

of the fifth precept what do you think

well what I think is that as a general

rule Sri Lankan monks don't really care

about vinea like the rules of monastic

discipline very much like this same Bon

gunaratana was Chief cashier at Viara
book service for many years so I mean he
just doesn't follow
viia and so to some
degree some sali's monks will justify
not following Vania or in this case not
following five
precepts I Used to Know This American
monk in Burma who told me that one of
his teachers who was sinal told him that
it's not paraja if you um if you what is
it called you commit Kus interrupt this
you know so long as so long as you pull
out before you squirt that's not it's
not doesn't really count as sexual
intercourse which is just blatantly

false and this also what Bon gunar rat allegedly States here about light use of alcohol not constituting a violation of the fifth precept I mean for a monk you can drink something that you think is not alcoholic it could be some kind of medicine it could be some fruit juice that's been sitting in the tropical heat for several hours you take a drink of it and it's turned into wine or it's got alcohol in it as just one of the ingredients of this medicine that's it you've broken the rulle Ru and you have to make confession for it so maybe things aren't quite so strict for Lay people they don't have to make confession for example but um yeah if if

light use of alcohol certainly
constitutes a violation of the fifth
precept just as handling money is in
violation of the Monk's precepts and
anyone taking 10
precepts so I'll just move on to Toronto
Nat's next question
is using the N bomb a violation of the
first
precept so I assume the N bomb is not
the neutron
bomb I think it is a certain uh word
that has become very taboo I mean it's
kind of ironic it's like when I was
young the worst word you could say is
[__] and now little kids can say it it's

no big deal you can say it on Prime Time
television I think

but you cannot say the n-word

unless you're on the right side

politically or you're black and you're

wrapping or something and then you can

say it but then generally there's not a

hard R but I think I'm digressing a

little

bit so is uh using the end bomb a

violation of the first precept the first

precept is

killing yeah you're I don't think you're

killing anybody by saying the

n-word I

mean

yeah I I don't think so I mean it's not

even necessarily a violation of the fourth precept which is wrong speech I mean it depends on the motivation of the person you know let's say there's a little kid who drunken Grandpa uses the n-word all the time the little kid hears it so often he doesn't even know that it's taboo you know he just that's just the word you use like or Sherwood Anderson's like short stories he uses the n word a lot in his short stories and in one of the stories I think it's I'm a Fool by Sherwood Anderson the guy is the the protagonist like the narrator is bragging about what an excellent n-word he had for a best friend you know

it just a word that wasn't taboo yet or
or getting back to the little kid I mean
he's heard it you know for years from
his his drunken Grandpa and you know he
just uses it not even knowing that it's
a bad word

so I mean it depends on your motivation
I mean if if you use the n-word without
any intention to hurt anybody's feelings
even if it turns out to hurt somebody's
feelings I mean you're not guilty of
wrong

speech you have you are guilty of wrong
speech in this case like using like
abusive speech perusa vaa you know
you're you're calling somebody the
nword um I mean it's

only a violation of the the fourth
precept if you're doing it deliberately
for the purpose of hurting someone's
feelings or making them feel bad in some
way so it depends on the circumstances
although nowadays I guess um using the
n-word I mean if you're just talking
among other people that you
know maybe you all have similar views on
something and then I mean you're not
even using it as a like an abusive term
towards somebody's face you know you're
not trying to hurt somebody's feelings
by saying it then no I mean it's like
cussing it's like saying [__] or
something so I guess I'll just move on

to the next question that's weird that
he wrote first precept I was thinking
it'd be fourth precept you know the
precept against wrong speech first
precept is

killing so let's move on the next
question here this is from seac and sead
zida and covac andad zida says in Terra
there are traditionally 40 meditation
objects and some modern weasa techniques
what meditation techniques are or were
used in other Buddhist traditions for
example such as those in sarasti Vada or
other ancient schools Mahayana schools
like yogachara or majaka or Zen or
Tibetan

Buddhism well I'm no Authority

on like non-teravan Buddhist Meditation especially in Ancient India I assume that the early schools all had similar meditation techniques especially like Saadi batana is I mean it's common to all the ancient schools um anapana or meditation on the the breath is common to all the ancient schools um I assume that some of the devotional stuff like recollection of the qualities of the Buddha that that also would be common to all of the ancient schools so with regard to something like Cina I would assume that Cina meditation also would be common to the ancient schools

that probably with regard to practice
the ancient schools of Buddhism really
weren't very different from each other I
mean I'm just this is like an educated
guess I don't know exactly what kind of
meditation like the uh mahasan gika
monks were

practicing like 200 years after the time
of the
Buddha

so yeah with regard regard to the
ancient schools it was probably pretty
similar to Terra I'm sure there were
minor

variations so let's

see then Mahayana schools like yogachara
maamaa well regard to Zen I mean Zen is

pretty well known you know they've got
like uh H
shikantaza which is um it it's sort of
like what the the Catholics call
contemplation you're just watching your
own mind and just keeping it clear as as
clear as you can and also Coons my [_]
meditation which may be um pretty much
exclusive to Zen especially renai Zen
and then Tibetan Buddhism there's lots
of visualizations then there's Zen which
is similar to shikantaza and similar to
certain teravan yogic meditation
techniques um but uh yeah I remember
seeing uh it was like a cartoon I think
it was in uh the inquiring mind magazine

it was just an early Buddhist
magazine and uh it just showed three
meditators you know terraa Zen and and
Tibetan and they're sitting there on on
cushions meditating and the thought
balloon coming out of the the terraa
monk is just like an empty thought
balloon and then the thought balloon
coming out of the Zen monk is like one
of those hand painted Zen circles that's
also empty and then the thought balloon
coming out of the Tibetan monk it's all
these ornate curly cues but still it's
in the inside of the thought balloon
it's
empty so when you get to the the highest
levels they converge I would

assume so I guess I'll just move on to
covac and cod zona's next question this
is kind of a strange

one he

says historically the Sanskrit language
is created by The graminian Panini

probably more than a Cy after the Buddha

already passed away apparently he was

from region where the rigveda was

written and wanted to freeze the

language in time because it had changed

massively since the time of the rig Veda

it is called Sanskrit because it comes

from the SRTA meaning constructed

whereas the naturally spoken languages

were called procrit Scholars refer to

this as classical Sanskrit as opposed to the language in the Vas which they call vidic Sanskrit why was Panini's language used as the proxy for the Sanskrit language when all other Indo Arian languages are also descendants of the original rvic language other ancient texts like the upanishads and the VAS that only came a few centuries before the Buddha are apparently in Sanskrit as well does that mean that they were translated later on or were they all coming from one region where they spoke Panini's language this part confuses me because there were many different languages all around North India so you

would think there would be texts from other languages as well before Sanskrit was made by Panini and also the suas claim that the Buddha was asked if the teachings should be put into Sanskrit verse but based on the history of the Sanskrit language it seems very unlikely the classical Sanskrit of Panini was around then so do you think this Su was added later or maybe translated to the language of Panini's region if that's what happened to other scriptures for some reason or is there some other explanation yeah I would assume there's another explanation and it seems to me I mean I've never heard before that a man

named Panini invented

Sanskrit I think he was a Garian and he may have composed the first standardized Sanskrit grammar so that in a way he sort of like picking you know like what he considered to be classical forms for Sanskrit but I mean he didn't invent it from

scratch and probably he didn't really modify it all that much he was just probably choosing and selecting certain forms that seem most elegant or most authentic the least messed with over time and uh just making grammatical rules because um I mean you have a language that has its own grammatical structure long before it occurs to

anybody to write a grammar book stating these rules and the grammar like in in English even Modern English the grammar is just this artificial set of rules superimposed on the grammar or superimposed on the language and uh I mean it it doesn't always work like two sentences you must go and you have to go are both I mean they both have the same meaning they're synonymous sentences but if you were to make a sentence diagram they'd be diagrammed very differently so I mean it's I won't go into it in detail because it's kind of pointless but I think the long and the

short of it is I don't think Panini
invented Sanskrit he just kind of
standardized a a form of Sanskrit that
already existed and cacin cot zon here
even admits that there were vidic texts
not the rig Veda itself but like the
brah tradition which came in between the
vas and the upanishads you had a group
of texts called the brahmanas that they
were in Sanskrit also it'd be a little
more archaic than classical Sanskrit I
suppose but it wouldn't be as archaic as
vidic Sanskrit and it's it's I mean
ancient Greek is the same way you've got
homeric Greek which is a more archaic
form of Greek
than classical Greek and then you've got

other forms of Greek too even in ancient times so Panini was sort of like the person who would uh like some Greek who would write like the definitive um like adic Greek grammar

so um and then Buddhist texts they're not even in classical Sanskrit it's called Buddhist hybrid Sanskrit as a general rule so it's it's sort of like a a strange form of Sanskrit that isn't Panini's classical Sanskrit either but it may be that like standardized classical Sanskrit goes back to Panini but still I mean he probably made relatively minor

variations on a pre-existent language
tradition so I think I probably answered
that

question so I think I'm just going to
move on to the next one this is from
coolwhip and cool Whip's getting right
into the philosophy here his first
question is what is beauty in Buddhism
is beauty essentially attachment for
example art architecture Nature music
mathematics science poetry Harmony
goodness

Utopia uh dot dot dot and then he says
is nibana the highest and only form of
beauty well I mean there's a whole
branch of Western philosophy trying to
Grapple with the whole question of what

is beauty like Aesthetics I think it's called and I've never really had much interest in it because it seems largely arbitrary to some degree what we consider to be beautiful is is like instinctive you know it's just kind of wired into us and it can be just arbitrary like a female turkey sees the grotesque purplish Waddles of a male turkey as attractive why I don't know I think maybe it's because they're d but that's just the way it is you know even birds and fish and so forth have an aesthetic sense in humans it's probably a bit more

sophisticated but uh what is beauty is
is like whatever is like with regard to
an image or or a series of sounds or
something it would just be like what is
Pleasant you know what it is that you
like I guess I mean maybe some people
they just like ugliness but then the
ugliness would have a certain Beauty to
them I

guess so

um with regard to the the last part of
this question Cool Whip asked is nibana
the highest and only form of beauty no
nibana is just beyond beauty or ugliness
so it's just off the scale and then uh
is beauty essentially attachment from
the terraa Buddhist point of view like

the ancient Indian point of view it says that a monk should avoid what is beautiful and anything associated with lust or passion and just he should just seek out what is ugly and as a young monk I was consider continually thinking I mean you look around all these monasteries and they're all beautified you know they've got flower gardens and and everything Tastefully arranged and everything and it from the very beginning once I started reading ancient Buddhist text it was pretty clear it would have been much more appropriate for them to have like rotting corpses or skeletons you know

I I even considered you know if if uh if I were ever to become an Abbot and I eventually did but I didn't do this but I used to think if I ever became an Abbot I'd sit up like the like the skeleton Garden you know just have all these skeletons with you know the the bones articulated held together with wire and just have them in the various poses of life that sort of thing it would be much more appropriate for Buddhist Monastery than having beautiful grounds you know manicured and landscaped and everything and then of course you read the uh advertisements for meditation centers in the west and one of the first things they'll say is

you know how beautiful the place is
which is already you're you're going
against like serious
dham so yeah for in terot of Buddhism
Beauty in general is uh it's considered
to be a kind of sensuality although the
dhamma itself you know sometimes it'll
say you know the dharm itself is
beautiful um but that's a different kind
of beauty and and that's just uh a kind
of goodness I suppose but even when you
get to nibana even even goodness is
transcended so we'll just move on to
cool Whip's next question here because
we got lots of
questions and so he says what is desire

is all desire UNH wholesome and then he
continues here how about AR Hans that
eat and sleep isn't this desire or arant
that move from one place to another also
desire

desire for nibo or desire and intention
the same if not how to discern whether
it's desire or intention for example
intention or desire to read venerable
poob bosa's books to reduce my
ignorance well desire essentially is
dissatisfaction because you don't want
things let's see I'm trying to Define it
without having words like desire and
want but desire essentially is
dissatisfaction with the way things are
you know you're it's like friction

against the way things are you want it
I'm saying want again but you would
prefer that things be different than
they are or you would prefer that they
stay the way they are and then of course
they're not going to because
everything's changing so desire is
essentially putting yourself at odds
with the empirical universe and the way
things are it's like you're trying to um
you know in your opinion things should
be the way you prefer and not the way
they actually are so it's you're setting
yourself up against the
universe so is all desire un wholesome
ultimately yes but then let's see here's

he includes desire for nibana and even
desire for enlightenment it's a kind of
it's the least UNH wholesome kind of
Desire but even that has to be
transcended it's like um the person who
is is like seriously striving for
enlightenment you know they abandon all
their other desires and they have this
one last desire this desire for
enlightenment and in a way that's
wholesome for them because it it helped
them to get rid of all their other
attachments and desires you know
supposedly but eventually they're even
going to have to get rid of that one
last desire that turns into their last
their last hindrance their last obstacle

to enlightenment is the desire for the
enlightenment itself because any kind of
Desire is really you're just like in
conflict with the way things
are but then let's see go up here a
little bit more and he says how about
orans that eat and sleep isn't this
desire or orans that move from one place
to another just because you do something
doesn't mean that you're at odds with
the universe like the common example
that I give is you get a flat tire then
I mean even if an enlightened being it's
a flat tire he's not going to say well
the tire is flat I'll just sit here by
the side of the road for the rest of my

life or you know I just won't do
anything um yeah Ian it's or let's say
you're dancing if you're dancing there's
not the desire to move your foot in a
certain way there's not a desire I mean
especially if you're good at it maybe if
you're just learning or you're just feel
awkward and self-conscious because
you're not drunk enough or something
then yeah there might be like thinking
and sort of having desires to do it a
certain way or whatever but once it
becomes just a flow like a spontaneous
flow then you're not in conflict with
anything you're just in harmony with the
universe you're in harmony with the
Dance Floor you're in harmony with the

the partner you're dancing with and so you're not really setting yourself up against anything so you get the flat tire I mean this is obviously the thing to do get out and fix the tire no problem

so yeah I mean

intention or desire and intention the same well not exactly that's kind of a subtle

question um and I mean an arant wouldn't have either technically because he doesn't make any Karma and Karma is intention or Cheta bition or will um desire is usually you know TNA or ch or something there are a number of

pow that uh kind of cluster around the
the Western English idea of
Desire um they they're they're similar
but I don't think they're exactly the
same I should have asked an Abid dama
scholar whether desire and intention are
exactly the same but I don't think that
they are I think that in Abid dama they
make like an ultimate distinction this
is desire like all like Chanda and this
is poition or Chad
but an Oran has neither so I mean you
could argue that they are kind of the
same but I
think let's
see yeah it could be they're all
intentions even are at least a little

bit UNH wholesome which is why orans
don't create them anymore and so I mean
then you got the question of you know
how does an Oran move
around and the official orthodox expan
is that they have what's called Kia
which is functional Consciousness and in
a way it's just sort of like
this it's like a volition that doesn't
create Karma it's just because the Abid
Scholars I mean it's not mentioned in
the sutas at all the Abid Scholars had
to come up with something so that's the
best they could come up with but for me
I do think that it's very possible
assuming again that enlightened beings

even exist in the context of

Sara that

um I mean there's just nobody there they

would be acting in accordance with the

the karma of the people who are

observing them and if nobody's observing

them they're like the tree that falls in

the forest and there's just nobody

there so I guess I answered that

one I hope I answered it in somewhat

satisfactory manner so I'll just move on

to cool Whip's next

question and cool Whip's next question

is if this universe is formless and

infinite mindmade where anything is

possible nothing is improved nor reduced

but is in Endless condition creation and

then in parentheses got samsara the
Mahayana conclude that both samsara and
Nirvana are essentially the same
emptiness reality is non-dual
everything is already perfect so you
can't perfect it anymore you are already
enlightened creation is here to enjoy
that's all the dharmakaya is doing
creating exploring having fun knowing
knowing itself dot dot dot its purpose
is to know itself and help itself know
itself we just need to strengthen our
connection with the enlightened Buddha
nature within us all I find mahay's
answer easier to grasp but wrong because
their metaphysics is answered and their

path has a clear purpose or fruition
whereas terraa leaves it unanswered and
I'm questioning the faith on which the
path relies I guess Mahayana
have reified the absolute is whereas
Terra leave it as the mind bending
middle way and can't help but
interpreting isn't my understanding is
that the unconditioned nibana is not
attained through conditions or some Sor
and this is a paradox our faith in the
uncondition relies on paradoxical
acausality when our experience can only
show us only conditioned causality we
need this Faith the mahayan answer the
Paradox by embracing it through
Indulgence and helping others they say

they can remain detached while indulging
maintaining the view of emptiness which
is nonsense because attachment is the
prior cause inter is there a question
mark here okay inter Terra the impetus
is to free oneself from suffering
progressing through disenchantment or a
kind of boredom of this condition
reality but if I don't exist why would I
intend on transcending the wheel of
rebirth who or what becomes enlight
maybe maybe that is the question maybe I
could have just said that part who or
what becomes enlightened who or what was
unenlightened can you explain to us why
the goal of Enlightenment even makes

sense if no being is suffering as no
being

exists there are only Aggregates based
on causes and conditions whether the
Aggregates continue or don't through
seeing nibana in this infinite Universe
Enlightenment and its opposite seems
equivalent okay he just keeps going

here H let's see there's another couple
more question marks here this is I mean
when you ask one question that has like
six question marks in it that's six
questions what are the reasons or a
working hypothesis one would have for
this path can you please explain how
Enlightenment fits into your view of the
block of

stone okay well maybe just that last sentence can sort of encapsulate all the rest of this I mean who becomes in light who or what becomes enlightened and see it's like the block of stone contains within it every possible statue even moving statues statues that are so complicated that they start thinking that they're independent of the block of stone you know they think that they have an inherent self-existence maybe even a soul that's how complicated some of these statues are in the block of marble and it's just kind of an illusion and so I mean the purpose is to just get the statue to stop thinking that it's a

that it's separate that
it's that it has like this inherent
self-existence separate from everything
else so I mean you're
using it's like a mahay text I read a
long time ago says the purpose of Lord
Buddha's teaching is to liberate us from
our Thinking by means of our thinking
and I
mean it just the delusion just gets more
and more subtle until it just poofs out
of existence I mean it's just the
delusion itself ceases and that's that's
what happens when somebody becomes
enlightened because there ultimately is
no Somebody That Never Was A somebody
it's just this illusion or delusion that

there is a somebody that eventually
stops so I guess I sort of answered that
question can you explain to us yeah I
think I just explained why the goal of
Enlightenment even makes sense I mean
it's just
delusion like sort of working on itself
to become less diluted until the
delusion
stops but the delusion isn't ultimately
real just like the person isn't
ultimately real but I mean it seems real
enough to us and that's good enough I
mean I mean ultimately it doesn't matter
whether you go to heaven or hell but to
you personally so long as you're a

delusional being like a pseudo being you think that you're a being then I mean it does kind of matter whether you go to heaven or hell and you're better off going to heaven and so I mean it doesn't matter whether you're miserable or happy but still it's probably best to go for the happiness instead of the misery so long as you're stuck in s Sora you got to play by the rules even though ultimately you are just part of some sorrow and you don't go all the way down to the level of Ultimate

Reality and I don't know if I answer that question but there's plenty more to answer here so let's see if I do better

on the next

one this is from ruie and ruie says is
refusing to pay unfair taxes a breach of
the second
precept

um is refusing to pay taxes essentially
stealing I think is what he's what he's
asking here second precept taking what
is not

given so I mean you're not exactly
taking what is not given you're just not
given so I mean from a Buddhist point of
view like an ethical point of view not
doing anything is ethically neutral just
to sit there and do nothing so long as
you're not thinking anything you know

you're just zoned out let's say you're not doing it let's just let's just make keep it physical so long as you are physically just sitting there not doing anything you're not doing anything wrong so yeah I think refusing to pay unfair taxes is not necessarily taking what is not given um it'll depend on your own mental States you know whether something is Good Karma or Bad Karma depends on the mental states of the person who is doing the act if not paying taxes is an act I mean if you're cheating on your income tax that's that would be at least lying but if you just say yeah I owe you this supposedly at least according to

the law but I'm not going to pay you anything well I mean good chance you're going to go to prison or you're just going to get your your paycheck garnished or something you know they'll get it somehow or another they'll make sure that it's it's not encouraged that people don't pay their taxes

so yeah I don't think it's necessarily a breach of the second precept unless you are like trying to deprive the government of something that you think is belongs to the government and you just don't want them to have it and I don't think most people who don't pay

income tax really are thinking along those lines so I mean it's against the law and you can get in trouble for it and you can cause a lot of suffering to your family for example if you just wind up in

prison but um I don't think it's necessarily taking what is not given because you're just not taking anything you're just not you're just not giving it so I'll just move on to ru's next question

here he says or more broadly if refusing to obey unjust laws entails a breach of the precepts what would be the result in karma now refusing to obey unjust laws personally as an American who still has

some

some respect for the the founding

father's ideals I mean

really um we have the right to disobey

what we consider to be unjust laws I

mean that's how America was born was by

disobeying what they considered to be

unjust laws it was actually like mostly

tax

laws

so yeah I don't think it necessarily

does entail a breach of the precepts

unless you're somehow killing or

stealing or or lying or something

by refusing to obey the unjust laws I

mean you know what the five precepts are

so I mean if disobeying an unjust law
isn't breaking any of these five
precepts then you're not breaking a
precept not not any of those five
anyway and the result in karma of
disobeying an unjust law it will depend
again on your mental state I mean if you
do it out of just virent hatred of the
government or virent hatred of of
whatever I mean the hate is going to be
be the Bad Karma and then of course
you're going to it's going to come back
to you somehow or
another

so let's see I think I answered that
question if refusing to obey unjust laws
entails a breach of the precepts what

would be the result in karma yeah again
people people ask you know what's the
karma of this action what's the karma of
that action but it depends on the
individual when two people can do the
same exact action outwardly and one of
them's getting Good Karma and one's
getting bad karma you know like the
classic example I tell over and over
again you like you got a snake catches a
frog the frog is fighting for for its
life squealing and you hear the
squealing you come over and you chase
the snake away and save the Frog well if
you did it out of compassion for the
Frog you did something good and if you

did it out of hatred for the snake you
did something bad even though it was
exactly the same
action maybe you did it for a
combination of the two which you did you
got good karma and Bad Karma at the same
time so again it's like you have to
uh look at your own mind see see what
the motivation is in order to get some
idea as to whether it's a wholesome act
or an UNH wholesome act if it makes you
feel more expansive and less less
egotistical more generous you know your
conscience is clear then chances are
you're doing something fairly good and
if it makes you feel guilty or you know
just you're afraid to you're looking

over your shoulder all the time after
having done it that kind of a thing then
probably what you did wasn't all that
wholesome depends on your mental States
so I'll just move on to the next
question here this is from Al bakina I
think is how to pronounce his name and
Al says what are your views on chiong do
you believe that Chi is a real thing
that can be cultivated within the human
body Chiang I know almost nothing about
Chiang I assume it has something to do
with Tai Chi see I mean really
Chinese um spirituality I mean aside
from like medieval Chan Zen Buddhism
maybe you know the da ching and stuff I

know very little

about this um chiong or somebody asked

me about uh that group in China that's

being persecuted in uh rested and

harvested for organs and so

forth and I I knew almost nothing about

it in fact the name is escaping me at

the moment so let's see do you believe

that Chi is a real thing that can be

cultivated within the human body or the

the danten I used to not this guy who

was really into taiichi he's explained

to me my danten which is like down I

think it's just right below your belly

button some kind of nerve plexus or

actually it's probably like this plexus

of chi channels you know you got like

the moon Channel and and the spleen
Channel and all this kind of stuff and I
think it's kind of like ABI where people
were just trying to formulate some
system that they could wrap their head
around as a way of trying to understand
the world they live in you know getting
back to the very first question of this
Q&A um maybe if you believe in it enough
it kind of lends it a kind of empirical
reality through a kind of metaphysical
placebo

effect um I mean some kinds of Chinese
medicine work you know acupuncture you
know they at least they have enough
empiricism that they know that this

actually works when you do it but uh
yeah in in uh ancient Buddhism they had
a different system it wasn't referring
to qi although they have like nadis which
I think literally means River you know
it's like streams of of energy going
through your body which I suppose could
be equated with Chi although they have
an entirely different system for
explaining it so yeah I mean it's really
I've had almost no interest in it I just
can't relate to it very well I have a
degree in biology never did we have I
have to take a class on Chi you know
because it's just not empirical at least
to the Western
mind or maybe the Western mind just

hasn't grasped such profundity yet but
uh yeah just I know almost nothing about
chiong so I'll just move on to the next
question this is from lib

Lam and Liber Lam says a mystical Guru
named Babu G said the end of religion is
the beginning of spirituality the end of
spirituality is the beginning of reality
and the end of reality is real Bliss
when that too is gone we have reached
the destination to me this sounds very
similar to Nana despite this coming from
a Hindu vdic system of yoga are there
steps in that sequence you would add or
remove or would you say it's overall not
a very Buddhist statement well I mean

when reality is is only the third step
and then there's more steps after
reality you're essentially leaving
reality behind it seems to me maybe he's
talking about empirical reality but I
mean empirical reality is what science
is going for and I mean that's not very
spiritual I would come before
spirituality I
suppose well I mean the first two parts
the end of religion is the beginning of
spirituality and the end of spirituality
is the beginning of reality maybe maybe
I just end there the end of reality is
real Bliss I mean that's that's you know
was it uh what was it
chitanand

chitanand yeah there's that's that's

like a Hindu

thing um Buddhism really does not Define

nibana as

Bliss um and certainly it wouldn't be

considered the end of reality that that

end of Reality Part just doesn't make

much sense to me because I mean from my

point of view you know nibana is

reality

so yeah I mean different different

teachers have different systems and so

long as it works for them and their

disciples that's fine but uh yeah I

don't think leaving reality behind

is a a good way to become enlightened or

reaching the
destination but then again he maybe
means something other than reality and
or you know when he says reality he
doesn't mean actual Ultimate Reality he
might mean some other kind of virtual
reality or something and I really don't
know what his uh context was for the
destination is two steps after you've
left a reality
behind so I'll just go on to Libra
Lamb's next question here do you believe
that Padma sambava really slapped his
hand into the Rock with that handprint
in it well leaving beside Padma samb
Baba slapping his hand on the Rocks um
in Burma there are supposedly two

Footprints of the Buddha where the Buddha stepped on a rock and left this footprint and it's uh what's it called Cheto there's like this you know it's supposedly a wildlife refuge but it's been completely raped and raked by villagers with the the forest service taken the side of the villagers because the Burmese are very people oriented people and they don't you know they prefer people to wild animals that can be scary and dangerous and so forth so I mean there are two supposed Footprints of the Buddha plus another footprint that's just left by an Arun and the one left by an Arun is

actually about foot size it's just a d
on a rock but the U the two Footprints
of the Buddha I measured them one of
them was like it was like 4 and 1 half
fet long I he was this big thing it
looked sort of like a map of Sri Lanka
kind of teardrop shaped and the other
one was actually kind of foot-shaped but
it was sort of like a a Sasquatch
footprint and people just venerate these
things you got Monks chanting paritas
sitting around the the footprint that's
all covered with gold leaf and people
are throwing money onto the footprint
and so forth and probably it's just a
natural rock formation that looks kind
of like a footprint or in the PMA s

Baba's case it looks like a handprint or maybe somebody carved it there if it looks really like a hand it's probably you know maybe some prehistoric Shaman put a handprint carved it into the Rock there or something but uh yeah I don't think that the Buddha stepping on a on a rock is going to leave like a four and a half foot long footprint and uh just by association i' I'd be skeptical of padas samb Baba's handprint also because I've never taken that kind of stuff very seriously I mean he was a human like the Buddha himself was a

human being you know he he somehow
married a woman and fathered a child to
her so I mean it's hardly likely that
he's going to be 27 feet tall and that
was the Assumption of these Footprints
is that according to the commentarial
tradition the Buddha was 27 feet tall
and so he had feet that were
correspondingly

huge so yeah I just I doubt it I mean I
can't say for sure but I remain
skeptical on that one so we'll just move
on to the next question here from Libra
lamb Can monks drink cow's milk if it is
offered to them

well uh cow's milk is considered to be
bojena or substantial food so it could

only be accepted between Dawn and
midday and uh yeah that's possible I
drank lots of C milk when it was offered
to me um usually it would be offered in
like a little

baggie and you just uh pour it into a
glass or something when you get home and
drink it so yeah yeah it's it's I mean
it's mentioned in the the rules of
monastic discipline that milk is
allowable for monks but it is food and
so you can't drink it in the afternoon
or at

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

and Stevens has uh added to the previous

question about drinking cow's milk it's
uh in slightly different language he
says might a monk suckle at the opulent
velvetine Tee of a young Jersey heer
overflowing with delectable nutriment in
order that he might gain the most
optimal nourishing sustenance with which
to bolster and fortify his mind and body
in his continuing quest for
enlightenment
and uh the main qu the main difference
from this question and the previous
question aside from the opulent
velvetine language is uh might among
actually suckle at the utter of a cow
and uh yeah I don't think that would be
allowable for a couple of reasons first

of all somebody would have to offer the
cow to him and an
offering it has to be something if
you're going to offer something to a
monk it has to be something that a man
of average strength can pick up and hold
out and offer and a full grown cow
probably is not GNA work that way um
especially regard to to
food um yeah I mean you can offer land
or something but if it's going to be
food it has to be manageable enough that
one person can hand it to the Monk and
the monk can accept it and the
cow yeah I'm not so sure about that but
also another problem with this is that

for a monk to be sucking on a female animal's titty um probably would be a minor offense it would be a Duca offense or an offense of wrongdoing like for a monk to touch a human female and enjoy the contact is a sesa offense um for him to touch um I think it's a unic and enjoy the contact that's a tulay fence which is one notch below s deesa in severity for him to touch a man or animal um and enjoy the contact is only a Dua which um kind of lets homosexuality slip through the cracks a little bit but then again a homosexual man might be considered a panda which is usually translated as unic because uh

there is fairly good evidence in the text that um a homosexual man is uh not 100% man you know he's got a little bit of woman mixed in with him

so yeah sucking on the the titty of a cow um yeah in a way there's no intermediary of the person offering the food to the monk I mean he have to offer the whole cow or something and then secondly coming into a pleasurable contact I assume he would enjoy the opulent velvetine Tee of the young Jersey heer overflowing with delectable nutrients

so if he enjoyed it then he'd be

breaking a rule too because he'd be in
contact with a female

animal so I think I'll just move on to
Stevens's next question

here and he says I think this is a good
existential question for Q&A potentially
how do you motivate yourself to be so
consistent in your

q&as well I mean I wasn't I didn't start
off being consistent in my q&as it

wasn't until um they be I started

getting enough questions that I finally

just had to stop writing for my blog and

that Saturday afternoon or or weekends

which was when I would write the blog

after I became uh a working man again

you know when I was a monk I could just

sit around and write as much as I wanted
I might have you know six or eight blog
posts already in the queue just waiting
to be

uploaded but once I started working and
having a woman and just you know having
all these duties and responsibilities
and

things to do and all that then my blog
writing just went down to every weekend
and I was consistent with that up
until well up until it stopped being
consistent I guess and so I've pretty
much taken over just doing q&as which in
a way is easier than writing blog posts
and especially I mean one strange thing

about being a lay person when you're working like in a sheet metal shop and so forth is you just don't don't philosophize as much and you don't think so much about philosophical topics to write about so it's easier with a Q&A because people are just offering up the philosophical topics and I'm just responding to them I don't have to thing them up myself unless you're it's uh the yoga Chara Buddhists are right in which case it's my own karma is generating these questions and I guess Terra would agree with that to a large degree so how do I motivate myself to be so consistent in my q&as well I mean

nowadays if I skip a week then I'm just
going to have
this it's just going to be
unmanageable even though now we might
have to get down to like three questions
each

um

so let's see how do I motivate myself I
don't know it's just it's just the way I
am I guess it's uh maybe I'm a
perfectionist and it just it's something
that kind of keeps me out of trouble I
don't know it's like writing my blog
especially when I was a a monk you know
it just gave me something kind of
wholesome to do and you know you get a

satisfaction from the job well done you know it might be kind of painful while you're doing it but as soon as you're done with it and you can look at it and you know you approve of of your handiwork it's it's fine um but how do I motivate myself I don't really even think about how tell you the truth I mean it just I just do it yeah I mean I don't have to give myself pep talks or anything for a Q&A you know I just sit here and maybe spend 15 20 minutes just kind of chilling out you know kind of emptying my mind a bit um but that's I've already already made up my mind to do the Q&A by then

so yeah I'm sorry Stevens I can't answer that question very well because I don't know it's just it's just my my nature it's like a character quality or something I don't know

so I just move on to Stevens's next question where he says he continues I feel it goes beyond Q&A in some sense that the regularity of dhama talks are a stabilizing and soothing influence and I like this idea that the teachers of the dhama are always there for us no matter how chaotic it gets no matter what time of day or night no matter the weather or conditions but as a teacher of dhama who

is there for you especially in times
where no one is listening to whatever
I'm doing it makes me question my
motivation and question myself as to
what I am doing how can I become so
consistent and steadfast in the same way
well let's see where's the first part of
the question here as a teacher of dhama
who is there for you well my sweetheart
is there for me in regard to most
aspects of life I think to in the
aspects that you know a sweetheart can
can be there for somebody she's there
for me me um but I mean I have been a
loner my whole life I've to some degree
I've considered teachers to be kind of
cheating you know having a teacher is

like cheating you just have to do it on your own and as a monk I mean I was pretty much on my own I was a loner and I inherited that from my father I think he just taught me you know just don't care what other people think you know just do what you consider to be the right thing to do and uh you're doing okay and he was is kind of eccentric and I turned out kind of eccentric partly because of

him um but again it's it's like it's for myself in a way I mean I'm I'm happy to share this with people and if people um you know find something of value in what I'm saying I'm I'm gratified by that you

know it's I'm making good karma I'm gathering up Treasures in Heaven but still I think it's more of a personal thing than um I've never been like a totally compassionate person you know wanting to to make the world a better place and so forth

um really like I've I've talked about dhama that there's like a more head oriented masculine path and a more heart oriented feminine path and the heart-oriented feminine path is striving for the cessation of suffering or Dukkha whereas the more head oriented masculine philosophical path is going for the cessation of delusion and really that's been my main motivation to practice

dhama is I want to understand reality I
want to know

reality and it really other

people um are kind of irrelevant to that
especially if nobody really exists

anyway so I don't know if I answer that
question huh I answered part of it I

bet yeah I answered part of it I think

who is as a a teacher of dhama who is

there for me yeah I pretty much answered

that I mean you can say I mean if you

have like

um like a deep reverence for some Guru

even if they're dead you know like a lot

of Christians have this deep reverence

for Jesus then you know they've always

got this feeling in their heart that he's there with them and uh for much of my life I've I've had similar feelings for neim Koli Baba up on top of the altar there more so than the Buddha because the Buddha is so far back in history that I mean he's just like this shadowy presence you know there's all these stories and legends about him but I mean how reliable are they obviously they're not all reliable so you can't really say what kind of a person he was I mean he was a wise person but still you know he's so far back you know he's like Hercules or something where you know he's just so far back that you can't really know him in a personal

level or at least I can't I mean you
just have to imagine this construct in
your own mind and then have a
relationship with that which is probably
what most Christians do with with h
Jesus in my
opinion so I forgot where I was even
going with that oh yeah somebody that
that is there for you um yeah I mean my
father always loved me and believed in
me that was like a a strengthening
stabilizing influence on me throughout
much of my
life I still kind of feel him in my
heart
so yeah I mean it's but it it's mostly

personal it's mostly like coming from
within myself that I'm just I'm just a
loner you know the entire universe is
just sort of

encapsulated you know in the thing the
size of the thumb in in the chamber of
the heart or whatever I don't know I'm
I'm starting to

babble so I think I'll just move on to
uh to Stevens's next and last
question which I hope will cause me to
babble somewhat

less and that is what are the rules for
monks oh wait this isn't even from
Stevens I forgot to write this this is
by Numa if I remember correctly so
please excuse me while I type numa's

name here okay

tight so Numa says what are the rules
for monks fraternizing with lay
people what about providing spiritual
instruction to lay people and more
specifically what are the rules about
providing spiritual counsel Andor
instruction to lay people of the
opposite
sex

okay well in the sutas it's not in the
rules of monastic discipline but for
example in the ATA waga which is very
ancient Buddhist texts um you know it
just says that monks should not
fraternize with lay people they should

not make up acquaintances in the village
you know just again you're you're a
loner you're going alone like the Horn
of the
rhinoceros and if you're going to be
hanging out with someone you should be
hanging out with fellow livers of the
Holy
life so I mean it's it's pretty much
discouraged but um There Are Rules with
regard to fraternizing with lay people
for
example um a monk is to be
banished if he is considered to be a
corruptor of families like being overly
familiar with lay people just you know
coming into their house hey how's it

going what's what's on TV you know you
got anything to eat that kind of stuff
just sort of behaving in an improper way
and sort of causing the family to expect
that of monks or have a low opinion of
monks then yeah that's a relatively
serious

offense I mean you get admonished three
times and if you're still doing it then
you're you're banished I mean you just
have to move to a different different
area just get away from the family that
you're corrupting um there is a rule a
pidia rule in the Pim Moka saying that
uh you should not teach dhama word by
word to anyone who is not fully ordained

so that would even include
novices um there's it's a little bit
controversial what you mean by saying
and I think it's Pau is the word where
you're you're teaching dhama like verse
by verse or word by
word um you're not supposed to do that
and uh that's like an ancient Indian way
of teaching I guess that was done you
know with by brahans and monks and so
forth but it wasn't you weren't supposed
to do that with lay people um see you're
not supposed to sleep under the same
roof with a male who is not fully
ordained for more than three nights in a
row and that includes novices also
novices are not fully ordained uh with

regard to women it's more strict of course like you're not allowed to sit alone with a woman where there's no man who can see what you're doing or hear what you are saying saying and and hear and understand what you are saying so I mean if he doesn't speak your language or it's just a baby or something then that wouldn't count they have to understand what you are saying and so um yeah it's it's much stricter with regard to

women

um see fraternizing with lay people and providing spiritual instruction to lay people yeah so I mean giving spiritual

instruction to lay people you can sit there in front of a group of people including men and women and deliver a sermon and that's

fine but uh like private council with women you shouldn't do it there should always be a chaperon you never sit down alone with a woman I mean if you have to be alone with the one you remain standing I used to do that when I was very strict around I mean the Burmese bless their hearts I mean they're they're devout Buddhists but Burmese monks tend not to be very strict in vinia and so even the lay people that want to be proper Buddhist lay people don't I mean a lot of them don't even

know that monks aren't supposed to touch women because so many monks touch women or money I mean most Burmese people don't even realize that it's not allowable to handle money because a lot of monks including some of the most famous monks are just demanding money we don't need to wallow in that so I think I answered that question you know there are a few rules not a lot of rules because mostly it's just assumed that monks are just going to be homeless radical renuncian just wandering around not living in the same place and you know building up familiarity with with families and so

forth they just go alone like the the
Horn of the rhinoceros although to some
degree a certain amount of teaching
especially if you're a senior monk then
especially on upos days it may be your
duty if people come to you asking you to
teach them some D then you should teach
them but again don't do it word by word
from the texts and uh you know
like I'm not even exactly sure what it
means I mean does it mean that they're
saying it at the same time or is just
repeat after me because that repeat
after me happens a lot in Burma I think
I mentioned that in the previous
Q&A like you're giving the precepts um
and the the refuges yeah I what I meet D

just means whatever I say you say so
they're just repeating after you because
you're leading them through the poly
which they might not know very well if
at

all so I guess I answered that question
so I'm just gonna move on to the next
question here and uh this question is
from

[Music]

om and oh says do you think sir any one
of your viewers is
enlightened and really I don't know um
just going with Statistics then probably
not um or going with the idea that
Enlightenment really is just uh it's

like a paradox and you can't really say
if it exists or doesn't exist in this
world then yeah I mean the whole answer
would be

paradoxical um and like ROM dos used to
say you know you can you can go to Tibet
and climb mountains and find gurus

that'll teach you the the mystery of the
universe when the whole time your aunt

Mabel back in Massachusetts has been

fully enlightened and instead of telling

you the secrets of the universe she just

says have some soup but as it turns out

have some soup is like the perfect thing

to say under the

circumstances

so yeah I mean the whole the whole thing

of Enlightenment is a kind of paradox
and so U it's very difficult to answer a
question like that but going with
um going with like orthodox Terra I mean
if someone was fully enlightened I mean
why would they be listening to me they
wouldn't need to be asking questions you
know they wouldn't need to be hearing
this kind of
stuff so my guess is probably not but I
hope I didn't offend any aans that are
watching this
video so I'll just move on the next
question this is from
Fred and this question is kind of hard
to wrap my head around do vinea rules

really have metaphysical
outcomes and a Venia rule is just words
on a on a palm leaf or words that you
memorize it's just words a Venia rule so
it doesn't have metaphysical outcomes
because it's I mean it's just inert you
know it's it's karmically
neutral but I mean it's your attitudes
with regard to any rules can't have
metaphysical outcomes you know it's like
if you're really super strict you got a
super strict monk that I mean he thinks
that he's you know he's just hopeless
because you know he keeps breaking some
minor rule he look he notices his
fingernails have gotten too long and so
that's that's against the rules and he's

he's like he has fallen from his moral
Purity because he's broken this rule
there are monks that are super strict
like that and yeah I mean you're making
Karma all the time by worrying about
vinia worrying about breaking rules or
not breaking rules that kind of thing
and of course I mean a Vine rule saying
that you shouldn't kill then I mean
regardless of the vinea rule you're
going to be having a metaphysical
outcome in in the form of karma karmic
fruition if you kill or if you lie or if
you steal or or if you punch
somebody or
whatever so many rules I mean they don't

have any moral quality really like the long fingernails thing or eating in the afternoon or having your robes cut and sewed in a certain way or having your hair you know long or short or whatever is I mean that's that's all morally neutral unless you've got some kind of like attachment to how things ought to be and then you're like in conflict with the universe and you're making Karma so it's not the V rules themselves that really have metaphysical outcomes but some V rules refer to actions that ordinarily have metaphysical outcomes and uh even so many rules that don't ordinarily have metaphysical outcomes just by breaking them some monks because

they've got this attachment to veneer
rules in their head like an obsession or
something it can still have a
metaphysical
outcome but the rules themselves are
just
words so I'll just move on to Fred's
next
question is nibana really out of the 31
planes of
existence that's an easy one yeah nibana
is not one of the 31 planes of existence
it is not a plane of existence
distance it is off the
scale so you got like those sort of like
the symbolic map of

samsara you know like that the ghosts
and the demons and the animals and you
know the ARA Hans and you know all this
it's it's like a trying to represent all
of samsara nibana is not on those Maps
because it can't be and if if somebody
puts it there it's not really nibana
they just they just don't know what
they're doing

so I'll just move on to Fred's next
question Enlighten is a word with many
connotations I I assume he means

connotations Enlighten is a word with
many connotations question

mark yeah sometimes Fred does this he'll
he'll make like an assertion and then
just put a question mark at the end so

but his questions are short so I grant him that but Enlighten yeah in poly and in English like in English to enlighten somebody you know it's like you're just teaching them something presumably important that kind of changes their attitude a little bit uh you know enlighten me with your knowledge of you know how to fix this car that kind of thing and in poly boded it has the same meaning I mean it can be intellectual Enlightenment or it can be spiritual enlightenment so it's I don't know if it's many connotations but it has like a dual meaning it can mean just mean like uh intellectual Enlightenment like

conveying presumably important
information or it can be becoming fully
enlightened in a spiritual sense so
we'll just move on to the next question
which is from White Ash

Piper and white ash Piper has a really
easy question for me to answer which is
as follows I have yet another person of
interest that I wonder if you are
familiar with and he is Bernardo castrop
and the easy answer to that is nope now
I I can't recall ever having heard the
name Bernardo castrop I've heard the
name castrip before but I think it was
like Hans castrip or something like that
so yeah sorry white ash Piper I'm don't
know who that is so I'll just move on to

the next question this is from Indian
guy Alias

Trevor and Indian guy says people would
bring Buddha gifts and money how did
they handle that if monks handling money
is forbidden is it because they
transcended material because of how
serious the earliest practitioners were
or do they just let the lay Buddhists do
what they want with it if it is for the
sa maybe the stories like that are made
up by King Ashoka and his people to
romantically tell stories that doesn't
matter to me either way I'm just
wondering what you've read that can make
sense of what seems to be contradictions

I don't think they are contradictions or
any anything though to some people they
might be I'm not skeptical about the
Buddha in any way my brain might
question things but I try my best not to
attach them because I know better than
to trust my meat
sack and uh I guess the the main
question up here
is see people would bring Buddha gifts
and money how did they handle that if
monks handling money is forbidden the
monks did not handle money they're not
even allowed to tell somebody what to do
with money so so yeah let you read the
poly texts whether it be the the vinia
or the sutas you're never going to have

the Buddha accepting Gifts of money I mean there is a rule it's in the Vinaya rules it's the longest rule if I remember correctly which is kind of a headache to recite it by heart but um it's like somebody comes and offers you money to buy a new set of robes you're supposed to say a monk does not accept money a monk may accept robes at the proper time so then the lay person they say well do you have an attendant and then the monk is allowed if they ask in that way I mean if they say who should I give the money to the monk isn't allowed to say because he's not supposed to tell people what to do

with money but if they say do you have an attendant who is your attendant then the monk can name the attendant and then they'll go give the money to the attendant and then they'll come back and say venerable sir I left this amount of money with your attendant and if you need anything like robes you go and tell him and then there's this rules about like you go to the attendant and he doesn't want to get anything for you he already spent the money gambling or something then after you've prompted him kind of urged him to to to get get you what you need not the money but the robe or whatever it is that he supposedly would buy with the money then I mean if

he's just not going to do it then it's
your duty to go to the person who
offered the money and say your money is
going to waste because this attendant is
is not you you know he's not doing his
job or whatever so you should go get
your money back because it's not the
Monk's money it's whoever offered the
monk offered the money because the monk
cannot own money at least according to
the ancient rules even though nowadays
most monks just shamelessly handle
money so yeah it wasn't because they
transcended the material it's just that
uh monks just did not accept
money so

so yeah I'm not sure what the stories
are that were made up by King of
shoka so yeah I guess I answer that
question so I'll just move on to uh
Indian guy next question
here which is what are the key
differences of the pure land ideas and
terraa Cosmos ideas I'm a Westerner so
it's hard for me to care about
either well yeah I mean I'm no expert on
pure land Buddhism I've I've read read
some about it you know I've watched a
few YouTube videos about it um you know
I've studied like the history of
Buddhism like in this book here Indian
Buddhism by AK waterer you know he talks
about like the origins of of pure land

Buddhism and so forth how ironically it was one of the earliest forms of Mahayana

Buddhism um but I assume because pure land Buddhism I mean going back to the the earliest pure land Buddhism it wasn't that far removed from pre Prem Mahayana cosmology I mean the arguments I mean the differences between Mahayana and terava are not so much cosmological they're more ethical and and then of course the Mahayana Buddhists cooked up this library of new sutas or sutras and so forth but uh I would assume that pure

land Buddhism doesn't have that
different of a
cosmology as Terra Buddhism although
pure land Buddhism does believe in
Buddha Fields you know where you've got
like this enlightened Buddha who using
psychic energy I assume you know psychic
powers he creates this world that is
like a heaven world like a paradise that
is very conducive to making spiritual
progress and so you know if you recite
or it the name of this Buddha or pray to
this Buddha in order to be reborn there
after you die on this crummy World um
yeah I mean that's nowhere to be found
in Theravada Buddhism or any Pure Land
Buddhism

Buddhism so I assume that's the main difference is this idea of Buddha Fields where you've got fully enlightened Buddhas who don't just walk around like goab Buddha did you know in in India and teach people they they have you know they they like beam themselves out project themselves out into some you know outer space and create this Buddha field or it it could even be like in a different dimension or something although I'm not aware of ancient Indian Buddhism really having a concept of other dimensions you know there was like in Terra Buddhism it's still pretty much uh

like Newtonian with regard to time and space and so forth so that would be the main difference far as I know so I'll just move on to the next question this is from cricket and frog song and cricket and frog song says in his recorded talks SN Goa gives the impression that he believes that his teacher SEI uak kin or maybe his teacher's teacher someone recent effectively rediscovered the Buddha's true teaching and Method after it had become virtually extinct Goa is vague of course but he makes it sound like this teacher had to partially recreate the true teaching furthermore Goa implies that he believes the Buddha

prophesied this Burmese rediscovery
2,500 years ago do you know if beliefs
like that are widespread in Burma it
seems like a remarkable claim and I'm
trying to understand the context well I
think probably what he's talking about I
don't remember the name of the Seattle
but there was a famous Seattle it
wouldn't be uak kin uak kin was a Layman
but it could be ubac kin's
teacher maybe um and I I could be wrong
I could be it's it's sa batana was
essentially rediscovered in Burma like
in the early to mid 20th
century and uh it might be the same
teacher that was a teacher of mahasi

Seattle for a while and also briefly a teacher of uh Tom Pulu who is the founder of the tradition in which I was ordained but it was before this monk kind of rediscovered s batana Buddhist Meditation was almost entirely samat that I mean there were very few if any teachers of just mindfulness you know the four foundations of mindfulness it was all like cultivating transstates and so forth so that may be what he's referring to because in a way that's like empirical or historic that SA batana or mindfulness or what was called weasa was

rediscovered in Burma you know early to
mid 20th

century so it maybe I I hope that's what
he's referring

to ubac Kin it may be the ubac kin's

only real Innovation was the whole

sweeping thing and if he's trying to say

that that was the original teaching of

Buddha then I wouldn't believe it

because it's not mentioned in the texts

you know the whole Gua way of sweeping

through the body I mean regardless of

whether it works or not mahasi method

works fine for anapana even though it's

the rising and falling of the abdomen

instead of the touch of oxygen or air at

the

nostrils

so yeah so I assume that what he's

referring to is the rediscovery of sa

batana mindfulness weas Med ation which

uh pretty clearly um it had a Resurgence

in Burma in like the early to mid 20th

century so I think um I hope I answer

that

question so I'll just move on next

question here this is Prav asking this

question he says your opinion on the

joala sua where the bodh satas say

derogatory terms about the Buddha and I

think he's referring to the gati Cara

Sutra in uh majima it's it's majima

number

81 and um jod paa was the the suta is
itself essentially a jataka it's like a
jataka story talking about the previous
the Buddha in one of his previous lives
and he was a

Brahman who lived during the
dispensation of kasapa Buddha and kasapa
Buddha was the Buddha before Goda you
know few million years ago
presumably and paa was a Brahman you
know it's totally
anachronistic and he had he was the
friend with uh ATI Gara which I'm pretty
sure means

Potter anyway gik Cara was a Potter he
was a poor man but he was totally rich

in faith and this story it's it strikes
me as fiction essentially it's like it's
like a fable where um kasapa
Buddha I mean he he needs food so he
just goes to got car's house and just
takes what he wants without anybody even
offering it to them which I mean it's in
a way is taking what is not given which
you think of Buddha wouldn't do but gik
Cara he thinks oh this it's a it is a
great gain for me that the Buddha came
and took my food and then later kasaba
Buddha we're talking about kasaba Buddha
not goab Buddha kasab Buddha he got a
leak in his Hut so that his Hut was
leaking so he just sends some monks or
or somebody to go to gik Cara's Hut and

just take the thatch off of his Hut just
tear the the thatch off and go and fix
his own Hut which I mean I don't think a
Buddha or any proper monk would do such
a

thing but in the text he did it in Gara
I mean they're they're showing how deep
of Faith Gara was he was like um this
king the king of Casi I think his name
was Kiki which means uh um it's a kind
of bird a

lapwing anyway this King Kiki is trying
to offer kasaba Buddha a residence for
the reain retreat and the the kasal
Buddha says I already have an offer that
I'm I'm going to take and it's this poor

Potter who just offered him this some
little Hut or something and um just
because he was so rich in faith but
anyway um this the main part of this
question is uh this Brahman jod paa who
was a Buddha who was goab Buddha in a
previous life when he still wasn't
enlightened yet um the he's friends with
gik Cara this this Potter and gik Cara
keeps tell keeps just pestering and
pestering and pestering him to go and
see Kasa Buddha you know it's good for
us to go and listen to him talk dhama
you know and jod Paulo the Brahman just
keeps saying why would I want to go and
listen to that skin head this over and
over again every single time I he's just

getting pestered and pestered he says
the exact same thing every time you know
why would I go and listen to that skin
head essentially you know it's not an
exact quote but it's a it's a derogatory
term for someone who shaves their
head and uh you would think that he
would have gone to hell or something for
bad mouthing a Buddha just calling him
by some derogatory slur I mean in other
stories in terod Tradition people go to
hell for for less than that but maybe he
was so I don't know he had so much
momentum of you know righteousness and
so forth that um his karma kind of got
his negative Karma was uh diluted down

by all the positive Karma and he wound
up not going to hell for
it um but my opinion on the Jody Palos
suda where the bhis jod paa who was
destined to become goab Buddha in 2,500
years ago U where he's you know
essentially using derogatory terms about
kasaba Buddha yeah I I just think that
it's it didn't really happen I think
it's just a fable it's for like
edification just showing how faithful
gik car was I mean he's sort of like
job so that that would be my take on it
and so I'll just go on to the next
question here this is from an ancient
path and an ancient path says could
reading nagar hinder someone's practice

that is just getting a good insight into
the original sutas and is Nar contrary
in any way to the Buddhist teachings
well this is kind of a n this is a Nara
question I don't know if it's sort of a
majama question but I don't think the
Fez is really necessary for this I don't
think I'll wear the Fez for this um
although I do have it right here it's
such a nice Fe it's so
nice but anyway could reading nagara
hinder someone's practice that is just
getting a good insight into the original
sutas so that's the first question here
I guess I got to divide this up here
okay get rid of that comma place it with

a question mark there we go okay so
reading if someone is just learning
about the basics of Buddhist philosophy
then reading Nar like the Mula majaka
Kaka would be like someone who's like
learning arithmetic or maybe like
seventh grade level pre-algebra and all
of a sudden they want to study
calculus so I mean it could confuse
somebody just because it's like a
different level of
dhamma um it's just more complex and
profound it's not so easy to understand
so it could cause
confusion um and probably you should
hold off on reading nagar until you've
got a good grounding in just the basics

at

least uh so that would be the only thing
thing I mean it's it's not bad to read
Nara obviously I mean it's it's profound
and he's like I keep saying he may be
the one um well-known Buddhist
philosopher who understands and explains
dependent co-arising or picha Samu po up
better than anyone
else better than the sutas do because
the sutas apparently the editors of the
titica at least the teren version of it
didn't understand it either and so they
just put in the same verbatim 12 Nido
Theory just every even where it doesn't
really fit the context it's just this

block of text that just gets inserted
into almost every discussion of
dependent core

Rising so yeah it's good to read narina
if you can understand him but uh yeah
it's it's like advanced level you know
it's like college level so if you're
still working with the the elementary
stuff you should you know get that down
before you move move on to the more
advanced stuff it kind of reminds me of
I had a a European monk tell me long ago
back when I was a monk that people
reading my blog I it they can get
confused it can shake their faith you
know it should be just for like veteran
dhama practitioners that newcomers

really shouldn't read my blog because
you know it could it could really shake
their faith you just undermine their
faith in

Buddhism and uh maybe nug Arna could
have that effect on someone is just
getting the basics of Buddhist
philosophy down because in a way he does
invalidate a lot of what is in the text
but what is in the texts it's you know
it's uh like wad Des it's just worldly
language you have to use sort of
delusional language in this world
because this is a world made by
delusion so I mean it's skillful
means so I hope I answered that question

and so the next part of this question
and is and is Nagarjuna contradictory in any
way to the Buddhist teachings um he's
contradictory in some ways against uh
Orthodox

texts like like Abhidharma and Nagarjuna
really don't see eye to eye

because early Theravada text they try to
reify reality whereas and which is like
not understanding dependent core Rising
very well in my opinion

so I mean Nagarjuna points out that really
I mean that's what dependent core Rising
is that the Buddha was talking about it
wasn't understood very well you know
it's that is is one extreme isn't is
another extreme it's just like this

virtual potential reality like a
conditional reality that we are living
in but Terra they they opted for Abid
dama which is like this total
reification it's ultimately real there's
12 something ultimate realities or I
think it's 128 ultimate realities with
nibana just being one of
them so yeah I
mean in a way it's contradictory to the
texts but I don't think that Nagar would
be necessarily contradictory in any way
to what the historical Buddha actually
taught but by the time you get the poly
topica it's already been corrupted to
some degree and I'm sure a lot of

develop terot would disagree with that
which is fine but yeah like Abid dama
for example most western monks just have
no use for it because they don't think
that the Buddha really taught it and
there's a lot of that kind of stuff in
the poly toptica like the jica stories
you know talking animals and that sort
of thing or the Buddha just sitting
around just bragging in grandiose terms
about how great he is and how everyone
should worship him that that's more of a
devotional thing that was added later
than the Buddha actually saying
that so I'll just move on the next
question here this is this is also by an
ancient

path and an ancient path says since
disrobing how many precepts do you
continue to keep specifically the
precept pertaining entertainment what do
you do for recreation any reading movies
Etc well with regard to the five
precepts then the only ones that I break
I mean I've killed a few in insects I
can't remember killing anything bigger
than an insect but like a few mosquitoes
or ants I've done that over the past few
years not very many but some and uh I do
have an occasional beer although this is
cranberry
juice so I do I had like one beer last
night I didn't even finish it I had like

four fifths of a beer last
night but with regard to eight precepts
well I sleep on a king-size bed with my
sweetheart which is definitely a high
and large
bed and uh yeah I do indulge in some
Recreation like my main
Recreations I do watch YouTube videos
but they're mostly like
documentaries like ancient history and
archaeology and that kind of thing and I
must admit
that uh for the past more than a month
I've been pretty much binge watching The
Walking
Dead and I mean this is just a golden
opportunity for me to kind of [__]

about the go The Walking Dead because I mean it's obviously propaganda like so many I mean almost anything that's created you know for for entertainment purposes by big

budget producers is going to be to some degree propaganda like for example almost all of the bad guys like the leaders of the bad guys they're almost all white men almost all of them there's one ala who was a white woman but her henchman was the big white man

and most of the good guys uh the groups of good guys are led by women like empowered women as though when

civilization collapses feminism is
really just going to kick into overdrive
which is hardly likely
also around season 7 it was like at
least 25% of the major characters were
homosexual which I don't know I don't
think that homosexuality is really gonna
I mean maybe if civilization collapses
there's going to be more homosexuality
just because people don't want to have
babies or something but I kind of doubt
that and also most of the marriages like
more than half of them maybe as many as
2third of the marriages are inter racial
and there's one bad guy
Negan who uh he turns good and as a way
of kind of

symbolically demonstrating that he
turned good he marries a black
woman and I mean I just don't think it's
realistic it's just like propaganda it's
it's propagandizing you know like
leftist Ultra liberal ideals of
diversity and inclusion and equity and
so forth but um one thing that they have
that is sort of against their their
propaganda like one of the
main one of the main what am I trying to
say here like messages that you get that
is probably unintentional I don't think
that the writers were really thinking
about this so much is that when
civilization

collapses that you really can't afford to have liberal values anymore I mean it is doggy dog that even the good people have to be absolutely ruthless and kill people in order to survive because if you don't you're just going to get slaughtered but also there's other things

like I'm from season one or two I'm just sitting there watching the show and like I'm saying you guys need walls I mean at the beginning they're just camping out in the forest and you got zombies coming through I mean what's going to protect them nothing that's what's going to protect them just you need walls I'm just like telling them I mean you need a

compound that's you know Fortified
Compound and it's got to be small enough
that you can defend it with the few
people that you've got and you need a
trench around the around the walls so
that the bad guys can't just drive a
truck through your walls which happened
at least twice so far in the in the show
just on and on and and they just spray
bullets I mean they get machine guns it
doesn't occur to them to switch over to
semi-auto they're just spraying bullets
and it's like you've got like a horde of
like like hundreds or even thousands of
zombies out there and they're just like
shooting I mean they're using up all

their bullets I mean even if they killed one with every shot there'd still be 90% of them

left and then I mean that was just so absurd I mean some of this it's it's just ridiculous I mean I I can find fault with Star Trek too but I've been watching the The Walking Dead lately it's like finally it's like it's like 10 years after civilization has collapsed you know we're getting into into the later

seasons and they've they've had to stop using guns even though they got this autistic guy that can that can reload ammo for some reason they don't use him for that and uh so I mean they're down

to using bows and arrows and crossbows and melee weapons you know clubs and knives and stuff and then finally they find an old army base that still has like machine guns and stuff still has ammo first thing they do I mean they've been without bullets for literally years at this point they just start spraying bullets again you know it's like they don't want to conserve their bullets for some reason it's just ridiculous but anyway you can so I watch this too but I'm in a way I'm sort of like observing it in an anthropological sense even though it is a good story but um because ever since I was a kid I've

been fascinated by the end of the world
or the end of civilization the collapse
of civilization like when I was a little
kid two of my favorite movies where
Planet of the Apes with Charlton hon you
know collapse of civilization and also
the Omega Man also with Charlton hon
again collapse of civilization I just
really into that for some
reason which uh would have made me a
good leader of a group if uh the zombie
apocalypse hits even though for some
reason nobody calls them zombies I don't
know why they don't just call them
zombies anyway let's get back to this
now that I've vented you know now that I
have bitched my heart out about the

shortcomings of The Walking

Dead let's see uh let's get back to the question here since drro since disrobing how many precepts do you continue to keep specifically the precept pertaining entertainment what do you do for recreation any reading movies Etc um my sweetheart and I are probably going to watch a Christmas movie pretty soon I listen to music sometimes but not a whole lot I went through this phase like a month or two ago where I just discovered the Black Keys and just was listening to the Black Keys I've watched that video of a Lonely Boy with the black guy dancing I mean I've watched

that probably two dozen times

pie it's it's a good video it's a good

song

so yeah I guess I guess I answered that

question didn't I so I'm just going to

move on to the next question this is

from creal

and creel

says did two or more enlightened beings

ever meet in person what are the chances

that more than two enlightened beings

were ever in the same place at the same

time and interact what would they do I

doubt they would start talking or play

football but you never know would there

be any conflict arising do you think

that if a conflict arose between two

people it is enough proof that at least one is not enlightened the conflict between the Dal Lama and gesi kelang gatso comes to mind well if you can if you can believe the texts then there have been hundreds or even thousands of enlightened beings all meeting in person like the the first great Council it was 500 arons 500 enlightened beings all attending this Council so I mean the Buddha had enlightened disciples and he met them so they were meeting each other and so enlightened beings yeah they they met in person if we can believe the Buddhist texts again I mean enlightened beings

are kind of a paradox so I mean it's
hard to say anything for
sure but definitely if we can believe
the Buddhist texts there have been
hundreds maybe even thousands of fully
enlightened beings all in the same place
like the Buddha would give a discourse
and you know many of the many of the
audience would become enlightened upon
here this
discourse so what would they do again I
mean if someone really is fully
enlightened then there's technically
nobody there you know there's no
illusion of anybody being there so it's
hard to say what they would
do yeah I don't know I wonder if like

neim karoli Baba ever met ramama and
Mahari you know they both lived around
the same time like mid 20th century
maybe they were f
enlightened even though they were
Hindus so yeah here's another question
here and it's it's good to keep your
questions down to one question mark
because if you've got a long like a
paragraph and it's got like six question
marks that's six questions that's not
just one question so do you think that
if a conflict arose between two people
it is enough proof that at least one is
not onl yeah that'd be a pretty good
indication wouldn't it

so but I mean you can't know anything
for sure because the enlightened being
is a paradox so I'll just move on to the
next question from

creel what do you think about the
kadampa tradition well I know that it's
Tibetan I don't remember even what color
hats they wear are they the Red

Hats no yeah see I don't even know
enough about Tibetan Buddhism to know
about the kadampa tradition I've read
about it I'm sure uh I'm not sure if
it's read hats or or what hats but uh
yeah I don't think very much about the
kadampa tradition because I know almost
nothing about them and so I'll just move
on to the next question and this is from

kazen or

Ken and kazen or Ken says you talked
about malevolent forces taking advantage
of openings in vulnerable

Minds do you think modern

Pharmaceuticals have opened some
gateways for lower realm actors to
commit random atrocity

well it's kind of a a materialistic way
of looking at it that

uh mainly if you got someone who's just
not well adjusted you know their mind is
not well adjusted you know it's got weak
spots in it that those weak spots can be
exploited by entities beings you know
they can become Spirit possessed more

easily than a person with like just a healthy well-rounded kind of of a personality

so let's see modern Pharmaceuticals I mean in a way that I mean it's it could be a kind of exacerbating thing that I don't think that a really healthy person who takes a pharmaceutical is like a spiritually healthy person who is resistant to any kind of [__] from you know dark beings or whatever that uh I don't think that taking Pharmaceuticals is really going to mess them up but I really don't have a lot of experience with Pharmaceuticals causing gaps or weak spots in a person's personality that can allow like

malevolent forces to seep in or whatever
I mean it's possible but it's going to
be more the karma of the person with the
pharmaceutical just being a gimmick
because anything you
experience is going to be the fruition
of your own Karma you I mean you are
creating a reality and so
you are creating the Pharmaceuticals you
take you are creating the effect those
Pharmaceuticals have on you so
ultimately it's going to be your own
spiritual makeup that's doing it rather
than some material entity that doesn't
ultimately exist that is called
Pharmaceuticals that uh I mean if you

got bad karma you might just wind up in an environment where you're getting pumped full of pharmaceuticals that are just in a way acting as a gimmick to further the dysfunction of whatever dysfunction you've got

going so I'll just move on to the next question here and this is from Joe and Joe says if you had your time over would you still have been a monk um I mean if I knew then what I know now I might not need to become a monk I might kind of give it a shot temporarily or something but if if I had if I if I knew then would I know now I mean I mean when do you hit reset like if if all of a sudden I woke up tomorrow

and I was 12 years old again and I know everything that I know now then I wouldn't have to become a monk I'd probably just uh try to meet my sweetheart a little younger maybe we could have a family or someone but uh yeah because I really just got as far as I could with the monastic thing at least uh under the circumstances

so yeah it would depend I mean if if I didn't know then what I know now I'd become a monk again I I certainly don't regret becoming a monk and having been a monk for 30 years I think it was it was

a good

thing

so uh yeah it would depend on I mean if

I knew then what I know now or not I

mean if I didn't I just pretty much live

the same life that I lived in the first

time but if I did then I'd know what I

should do and uh probably invest in

Amazon

stock and then I'd just live a life of

leisure be a member of the Leisure Class

wouldn't have to work in a sheet metal

shop and I could try and live a kind of

daric existence with a lot of maybe

meditation formal meditation a lot of

introspection philosophizing and so

forth so okay I think I answered that

question so I'll just move on to joo's
next question can you describe the State
of Mind of your deepest meditation well
that's that's tricky I mean it's hard to
explain but uh just sitting there with
my mind just silent and just clear like
glass you know it's like you've got this
wide open Consciousness I mean you're
more conscious than you would be if
you're like walking around making noise
so but I mean there's there's
almost no content you know it's it's
almost like pure Consciousness every
once in a while just because you know
the brain has to do its thing a thought
would start to arise but the mindfulness

is so strong that it's sort of like um
the surface of a pond where a big fish
is like coming up you you can already
sort of see like little ripples before
the fish hits the surface and then as
soon as you're I mean you just become
aware of it as soon as it starts and
then it just flattens back out again you
know the thought does not
even become fully
formed and you just sit there just uh
with your mind like a mirror just like I
said just still silent and clear like
glass sort of so to speak so I'll just
move on to joo's next question and that
is what are your favorite podcasts are
you a Joe Rogan fan I couldn't be a Joe

Rogan fan just because his podcasts are like three or four hours long and I just there's other things I would rather do for three or four hours straight than just sit through a podcast in fact I don't really watch or listen to any podcasts I mean these q&as are kind of a podcast so I guess these might be my favorite um I guess sooner or later I will start just doing like live streaming these q&as just for just to see what happens you know just for the just for the shits and giggles so yeah I don't have a favorite podcast I mean there some interviews on YouTube that kind of Maybe started off

as podcast like um interviews with like
uh Victor Hansen who I like you he's a
Normy but he's he's very intelligent and
articulate he can see the big picture
fairly well with regard to politics and
so

forth but yeah technically speaking I
don't don't listen to
podcasts so we'll just move on to the
next question and this is from Austin
and Austin says is America's A diversity
a

weakness and it depends on what kind of
diversity you're talking about I mean if
everybody were exactly the same that
would be a weakness because um like just
going with darwinian natural selection

you know if you've just got this
uniformity you've got some change that
comes in it's more likely to just wipe
out civilization but if you got like a
diversity of different like points of
view and attitudes and so forth and just
different body types and all that then
at least some of them are going to be
able to adapt to the change and and it's
just going to continue evolving and
probably even

Prosper but um I mean you can take that
to an extreme where everyone's just
disagreeing with everybody else
everybody's at everybody's
throat so I mean you need to have a

middle path between total uniformity and total diversity you know there should be like at

least like ideals of the culture that everyone can pretty much agree on other than maybe a few weirdos on The Fringe and that's the way America used to be up until the new left just started hating on America and trying to destroy it and they've really weakened America quite a lot which they think is a good thing but I mean Decline and fall of a great civilization is not a good thing because what what they want to replace it with is much worse I guarantee it so I mean race really has little to do with it other

than uh I mean it's if you've got
foreigners from of a different ethnicity
Coming to America I mean if if they
integrate into the culture you know and
they start adopting the American ideals
traditional American ideals you know
they're proud to be Americans they see
that it's better than the the third
world [__] hole they came from
then that's
fine but I mean if it's just hating on
Hai and and just causing illegal
migrants just flood into the country
supposedly for the sake of diversity and
inclusion and and just compassion for
for so-called refugees who are really

economic migrants in most cases um and
then they don't even try
to try to integrate I mean Hispanics
generally do a pretty good job of of
integrating even though they might still
listen to their salsa music and speak
Spanish um still I mean they get jobs
and you know they're willing to work and
they don't much like illegal immigration
either because most of them are the ones
that have been living here for a while
they came here legally they had to go
through all the red tape and everything
and then it's not good that all of a
sudden now people are being rewarded for
breaking the
law

so yeah to some degree America's diversity is a strength because we had a certain diversity like we didn't have a monoculture with regard to like religion you know we don't have a monoculture with regard to political party we don't live in a one party State although I mean the the globalists the ruling Elite of both parties were kind of the unip party I mean they're still the unip party although the Republican half of the unip party is is dying and uh good riddance to the uh the neocons but um yeah I mean you just need a middle path a certain amount of diversity is good but you have to have

enough uniformity at least with regard to like ideals and so forth that it kind of holds the the society together and to have a monopoly on religion I think is a bad idea just because it leads to corruption so long as you it's like capitalism if you got different religions competing with each other it's like different companies competing with each other you're more likely to have a good product at a reasonable price because different sellers are competing for your money and so they're they have to give you a relatively good deal if they can a better deal than the other guy and that's the way religion works too that's one reason why religion or

spirituality reach such dizzying Heights
in India in ancient times because you
had all these different systems all
competing with each
other and it caused them all to be on
their toes and to like not be totally
corrupt unlike like medieval Europe and
Roman

Catholicism so I'll just move on to

Austin's next

question excuse

me Austin says my dear friend

experiences debilitating panic

attacks that hinder her mental

functioning and even lead to physical

breakdowns she really loves Dharma and

she even responds well to discussions about it but at times she becomes unresponsive and unable to function during panic attacks she tries to meditate but even this doesn't always work how can I best support her in such situations they seem to be getting worse yeah that's I mean I might not be the best person to advise anybody with regard to panic attacks because I don't think I've ever really had one I sort of had a drug induced one a long time ago but

uh uh yeah I mean I'm not prone to panic easily

so um I mean there are there are certain Pharmaceuticals like beta blockers that

one can take that reduce the the odds of
it happening or reduce the severity of
it um my sweetheart has had a few panic
attacks in in her life especially when
she was younger and she was saying that
there's a grounding technique that you
can

do and

um I'm not I'm not EX exactly show what
the grounding technique is so again I'm
really not the best person to uh discuss
this but uh I mean if she can do
mindfulness meditation I mean that's
that's probably a good one is I assume
it would be really hard if you're having
a panning attack to be mindful of the

panic attack that at that point you're already spiraled out of control to some degree but um I mean just getting into the Habit when you're not having a panic attack just being in the habit of mindful observing with a certain

Detachment your own mental states that that has served me well um in the past where um you know you're just getting into the habit of observing your mental States and then something happens then you start throwing a contion just like one time it was just the the Blazing heat in central Burma during the hot season you know it just would not let up and um I just it was like I snaped napped one time I'm just like yelling

and cussing and slamming things but at the very same time there's I'm I'm so used to being mindful of my mental States at that time that I'm just observing it's like I'm an actor observing this me playing the role of this person throwing a contion you know there's there's like this other part of me this just kind of stepp back and is just observing with equinity the whole conion as it's happening so it was like I was an actor playing the role of somebody throwing a contion but at the same time there's this other level even though you're kind of living the part maybe there's this other level

where you're still the actor and you're aware that the audience is out there or the camera and you know how much slobber you got in your mouth and you're trying to remember your lines you you know you might remember that soand so flubbed his lines you know five minutes earlier or something but at the same time you're doing this convincing this contion so I mean practicing mindfulness it's like a panace it's like a cure all it's good for anything that ails you but you have to practice it when you don't need it so that when you do need it it's there is just like second nature but uh if that's too much that it takes too much commitment or effort or

time then uh I don't know I would uh
definitely try to uh you know like
consult with a psychologist a clinical
psychologist or something who knows you
know how to treat some somebody that has
this this

issue um I mean if if you want to help I
mean it may be I I'm I'm not exactly
sure I've never really been uh in the
same room with someone throwing a
full-blown panic attack that maybe just
giving them a hug you know just you know
you're there and you're on their side
you're GNA help them you know just beam
love at

them maybe that would work but uh I'm

not a a professional and so I really
can't uh can't say what for sure would
be the best thing to do so I'll just
move on to Austin's next
question which is thoughts on
ssris and uh I didn't wasn't even sure
what ssris were they're like a serotonin
re reuptake inhibitor and I don't even
know what what a serotonin reuptake
inhibitor like what drug would be one of
these
so I'm really not sure so I don't really
have much thoughts on on that
sorry but it's some kind of
pharmaceutical and maybe it's like an
anti-depressant or
something so I'll just move on to the

next question this is from popcorn
boxing and popcorn boxing says is it
possible to attain Enlightenment and
then lose it and interestingly according
to the Terra vadens I think no maybe it
wasn't the Terra voden it was it was
maybe maybe one of the other early
schools of Buddhism were saying that
that is what caused the first
Schism that um the Terra vadens believe
that once you become enlightened you
don't fall back and it's right there in
the texts you know once you become
enlightened there's no backsliding from
from Full Enlightenment but there were
some like mahasan gika the mahasan gika

branch of the first Schism I think they were saying that you can backslide into becoming unenlightened again and it was like one of the arguments about like do orans have wet dreams you know do they have sex dreams at night that kind of thing so the the Orthodox terot point of view is that if you attain full Enlightenment that's it you're not going to fall back you're not gonna you're not going to be uh you're not going to backslide and that's in the AA waga which is an extremely ancient text

so yeah so I think I answered that question so I'll just move on to the next question and this is from

oalt I think I don't know how to
pronounce some of these names anyway oal
says is there a question you have been
waiting or wanting someone to ask that
hasn't come up
yet uh you know not
really I'm pretty much the the whole
spectrum of questions has been asked um
still nobody has asked if Mr Spock and
qu Chang Kan got in a fight well I mean
I kind of wondered about that you know
Mr Spock from Star Trek and qu Chan Kan
from Kung Fu if they got in a fight who
would
win but um yeah I'm still not sure about
that or also up on the altar I don't

know if you can really even see it it's
uh in between the Little Buddha statue
and the the picture of
maharaji um there's a little statue of
Bobo I think is his name and nobody's
asked me about that I'm pretty sure I
can't remember anybody asking me what
the little the little statue of the the
little guy next to the Buddha is maybe
from the distance I mean you can hardly
see it back there I guess maybe they
just think it's a smaller Buddha statue
but it's a statue of
Bobo and nobody's asked me about that
that I can remember and if somebody did
please forgive me for not remembering
you asking about Bobo

Hong so I you didn't uh o Al here didn't say that I have to answer that question you just asked is there a question you have been waiting or wanting someone to ask that hasn't come up yet so not really I guess but uh I mean I'm not dissatisfied with your questions I think you're doing good asking questions so next question is from Josh oh man yeah we we'll be done way less than three hours we're not going to last as long as Joe Rogan and I don't get I don't get wasted smoking weed for these podcasts either like Joe Rogan apparently

does so anyway Josh

says hey poasa have you ever read the autobiography of a yogi by paramahansa Yogananda if so what is your view on him he was one of the first Indian gurus to come to the west and speak about Eastern spirituality from what I've been able to find he seems to have been a very saintly character he also apparently was able to voluntarily stop to his own heart and that's how he unified himself completely through his own

will well I've read the autobiography of a of a yogi twice once when I was a teenager and at the time I I took it fairly seriously and then years later I read it again and the second time I read

it I mean I was more used to reading spiritual stuff and it's like it was hard to keep both eyebrows at the same level sometimes it's like starting to go like this like he had like Lord Krishna levitating outside his hotel room or Jesus Christ came to him in his hotel room one time was whispering secrets so profound that he can't write them down in the book and I think maybe he was a little gay although I don't think that really is relevant but that's one impression that I got and uh yeah I mean he he was either very gullible and maybe sort of uh a person that just sort of believes stuff that I mean he just kind

of makes it up and believes it while
he's while he's say I mean some some of
the stuff in the book I just could not
really believe but it's so maybe In some
cultures you just live in like this
surreal kind of a world where I mean
there's no sharp line dividing reality
from

imagination because that's the kind of
surreal kind of effect that I got from
reading that book especially the second
time part of hamsa uh strangely enough
literally means ultimate

Goose but hamsa is is or it could be
like the the Ruddy shield Drake the
brahminy duck it's it's called a duck
but it it looks and sounds like a goose

it's big like a goose and honks like a
goose I don't know why it's called a
duck any ornithologists out there maybe
that's a question someone can answer I
mean why is a a shell duck called a duck
when actually I mean it's big like a
goose and has a long neck like a goose
and honks like a goose I don't get that
but anyway the hamsa was sacred to the
god Brahma and they're relatively
they're still considered to be
auspicious birds in BMA Nobody messes
with them
much so let's
see uh yeah with regard to Dying by
voluntarily stopping his own heart I'm

not so sure about that how would how
would anybody really be able to verify
that unless he just was announcing to
people I'm going to I'm going to kill
myself but by stopping my own heart
through force of will but maybe he was
almost dead then

anyway

so yeah I mean I read it I mean anyone
who's literate in like

Western sort of eclectic spirituality I
mean it's it's sort of a standard it's
like a classic so I mean it's good to
good for people to read it and just make
up their minds for

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

and we're we're getting kind of towards
the end here we still got a few
questions but uh we're we're way more
than 90% done I'm pretty sure so anyway
yugao says can you please explain hell
wardens what is their karma for just
doing the work and how do you become one
wa does yugao want to become a hell
Warden I mean it's just he's just doing
his job you know this is what the hell
wardens are doing they're just doing
their job but um I was told and I think
this is in the commentaries that the
hell wardens or the you know the Demonic
beings that are torturing people in hell
are just I mean there's they're really

not beings that they're just like um
apparitions or like holographic
projections created by the karma of the
the people that are uh suffering in the
hell Realms and I've been told um that
the celestial nymphs are like this also
that they're sort of like sex bots or
something they're not really a conscious
being they're just like a a Karma
projection in heaven and the hell
wardens are Karma projections in
hell um that is

uh that I think that's the official
Orthodox terot of Buddhist position on
Hell

wardens um but assuming that they are
kind of a they are beings I mean one of

the reasons why I found out that there's
supposedly like projections you know
Karma projections and not real beings
they're not sentient beings is I was
asking where do they fit in the 31
Planes of existence you know they're not
auras I'm pretty sure you know so
there's no demons there's no Fallen
Angels really in in Buddhist cosmology I
mean what category would they fit in and
then I had this German monk tell me that
they're just they're just Karma
projections that they're not sentient
beings and that kind of makes
sense so do you become one I guess you
wouldn't it's probably you're probably

better not better off not becoming a
hell Warden just
saying I mean if you had to choose I
mean maybe they' you know I think
sometimes like in uh in Christianity
they might have this idea that you know
the Devils will like recruit some of the
more evil hell denisons to just you know
switch sides and help poke people with
pitchforks and so forth but um yeah I
think really hell is
self-created I mean on on this planet I
mean there are hell Realms right here on
this world I guarantee it and uh it's
not so different you in in other Realms
like lower Realms and you don't really
need

demons um messing with you when it's
your own mind is so tormented just
through its own
dysfunction I used to think that uh it
was unfair in Buddhist Buddhist
philosophy that someone can do a bad
deed and then they they're punished for
a million years in hell you know like
Christianity you're punished forever
you're not quite good enough to make the
grade you're not quite good enough to
get into heaven so you're just tortured
forever for just you know sins that you
committed for a few decades and it just
did not seem like it's it was an
equitable trade it just did not seem

just so then I was thinking like after living in Burma when it's just blazing hot like living in a furnace I figured it was probably their own bad attitudes just their own misery was creating more miserable Karma and it just became like a habit and they just kept them there you know it's like they're just kept generating new karmas they're just cursing the cursing themselves and cursing the universe and just cursing everybody just because they're so absolutely miserable there but I have uh digressed and so I move on to yuga's next question which is also about hell he says also what kind of bodies do hell sufferers

have do they just inhabit one pre-made
well yeah you don't get born in hell
it's just you spontaneously arise there
and you have a a body probably not so
different from the body of a spirit or
like a so-called ghost

AA I mean they wouldn't be exactly the
same but they're at a lower level than
the human level so they're going to be
made of a cruddier form of matter they'll
be made of matter you know they're not
in a formless realm but it's it's a
cruddier kind of matter and uh whatever
that
means and uh they have a cruder mind
definitely so I mean it would be sort of

a a projection of the body they had
before maybe or just sort of the
residual self-image like in The Matrix
you know you upload into the Matrix and
you have the residual self
image that doesn't have like the the
sockets the holes and stuff so it'd be
something like that I'm pretty sure the
karma

body so I'll just move on to the next
question this is from keep the vinia and
keep the vinia says Can monks drink milk
multiple times a day this this is the
third milk question of this Q&A Can
monks drink milk multiple times a day
well as I said before it is considered
to be bojena or substantial food and so

you would have to drink it between Dawn and midday and there's no rule against drinking it more than once so long as you drink it at the allowable time time between Dawn and midday uh I guess a lot of th monks will drink it in the afternoon which is just a violation I mean you might as well be eating rice in in the afternoon as drink milk in the afternoon so yeah there's no rule against it although monks are supposed to know moderation in eating and uh also just one meal a day was prescribed in the early texts even though most monks now days have more

than one meal a day usually like the
dawn meal like right after Dawn you know
it might still be pretty much dark
outside they'll get up early and eat a
meal and then like shortly before noon
they'll have another meal there's a lot
of monks do that and uh yeah you can
there's no actual rule against drinking
milk um between Dawn and midday as much
as you want so long as uh you you
obtained it and you haven't stored it
overnight you obtain it properly you
know somebody who isn't a monk offers it
to a monk that kind of
thing and uh you can't ask for it if uh
nobody has given you permission
beforehand to ask for milk um unless

you're sick so there's there's lots of
sort of uh little rules associated with
it but there's no rule against drinking
milk multiple times a day so I'll just
move on to keep the vena's next
question does Buddhism have the
advantage over jism that it does not
claim that enlightened beings are
omniscient as Buddhists we can excuse
enlightened beings like the Buddha for
his cultural ignorance of cosmology
because he was not omniscient can the
Janss also excuse mahavira in this
regard

well the a Buddha I mean not all
enlightened Janes are considered to be

omniscient it's just like sort of the
just equivalent of a Buddha I think uh
de tonara I think is what they're called
like a Vera was considered to be
omniscient and he was totally omniscient
like absolutely omniscient in that he
knew everything all the time you know
his mind was just filled with infinite
knowledge infinite number of points of
view you know like if he saw an
egg he would see that egg from every
possible angle simultaneously maybe not
with his physical
eye but he would know everything there
is to know about that egg in fact he
would know everything there is to know
about everything

simultaneously always whereas the Buddha
also I mean in the text he's saanu which
means all knowing he is also omniscient
so a Buddha is also omniscient it's just
that he doesn't have this absolute
knowing everything always at the same
time you know he does he's not having
infinite knowledge in his head
constantly like a Jane de tonara it's
just that he knows whatever he wants to
know that's the official orthodox terot
position on the omniscience of a Buddha
is you know anything he really wants to
know he can know
it so that's may explain why he's asking
people what their name is and so forth

and uh they're kind of mocking and there are some sutas mocking The Janes for claiming that you know mahavira was fully enlightened when you know he's still asking people what their name is and where they came from and that kind of

thing

but let's see

yeah so and I'm not exactly sure what the official Jane excuse is for mahavira asking people what their name is and where they came from if he already knows it so you have to use a some mental gymnastics sort of like some Christians some Christian groups you know God knows everything so that you know how how do

you explain you know God all of a sudden
being upset
when um for
example you know right before the flood
you know he just gets disgusted and
regrets ever having created the human
race this I mean he should have known
because he was
omniscient so you're get into
omniscience and you're getting into
infinity and Paradox and so forth but uh
I do think the Buddhists have the
advantage over jism not because I mean
they've sort of made a more moderate
form of omniscience for their founder
which is you know Improvement I

guess um but also I mean just the philosophy itself is it it holds more water in my opinion than jism I'm not going to go into you know what the fundamentals of jism but I do think that Buddhism is more sensible so let's see here okay I was going to say something else and then I forgot what I was going to say so maybe I won't say it after all does Buddhism have the advantage over jism and it does not claim that enlightened beings are omniscient yeah well I mean it's just a milder form of omniscience I guess so I'll just move on to the next question this is also keep the

vinia and keep the vinia says were you surprised when you read the poly Canon for the first time and realized that it contains quite a few misogynistic passages in the angura Naya in particular women are described as stupid and jealous and compared to Black snakes no I wasn't surprised I mean you read text almost the text of almost any religion are going to have some misogyny I mean you read like The Book of Ecclesiastes in the Old Testament it's pretty misogynistic so you know early Christianity you know it's like yeah and there's there's

misogynistic stuff women are the devil's
Gateway and all that so I mean it didn't
surprise

me no I mean there I think like culture
in general were very misogynistic by
postmodern you know 21st century
standards it's like the whole world was
misogynistic with few exceptions up
until

recently so yeah I'm familiar with you
know ancient texts and I uh I'm not
surprised if I see what is considered
to be misogyny but I mean considering
that the text were trying to get monks
to break their attachment for women I
mean they're going to use some pretty
extreme

methods sometimes to try and get monks
to just not desire women so it does make
sense from a psychological point of view
also so I guess I'll just move on to the
next question and this is from
KitKat and KitKat says howdy I'm
wondering if you have a recommended
translation for the sutta I don't want
to make your q&a's longer with a simple
question but he already did because he
asked this in a different room on the
Discord server but I said I'll answer it
in the Q&A because this is a Q&A
question I mean it's a q it's a q
question and uh I mean it's kind of an
important question you know I mean it's

it's definitely applies to Western
Buddhism and so forth but the thing is I
really don't have a recommended
translation for the sutin P I mean um on
the back there I've got KR Norman's old
translation and he's got like a critical
version where he's got lots and of notes
just

discussing the grammar and so forth from
which from a philological point of view
is good but KR Norman um he really
didn't understand a lot of what he was
translating because he's not a Buddhist
and not particularly interested in
Buddhism he's just interested in the
poly language so then there's aan tanero
I mean probably ajan tanero would be

about one of the best that you can find
on uh access to Insight you know find it
on the internet um his translations of
verse especially are kind of
idiosyncratic and
self-indulgent but his understanding of
the dham is pretty solid with regard to
translating texts like the sutin I mean
with regard to the Tika I prefer my own
translation of that I've translated a
few other texts but I I haven't
translated the entire sutin there are
some fairly bad translations out there
um I think there's a Sri Lankan Monk I
think he's sh Lankan stisa I think who
did a translation of the suata that was

not good at all for example the in the
the kaga suut the the Sutra of the
rhinoceros horn he refers to them as the
unicorns horn you know he just this
makes the executive judgment that he's
going to change the rhinoceros to a
unicorn although I guess the legend of
the Unicorn originally I mean it
originally came from the Indian
rhinoceros so I guess
well his translation is still pretty bad
um bot's translation is probably pretty
solid but I've never read it and also
there's one translation that I would
really like to get my hands on it's from
by Lord Chalmers it's like an early like
from like the 1920s that's all in verse

it's not like ajan Tano's attempts at translating verse by just you know idiosyncratically positioning words and strange positions on the paper that Lord chalmers's actually went to the trouble of putting the suddin at least the the verse parts of it which is most of it into meter metered verse and um I mean sometimes just for the sake of like Metra CAA where you're trying to have to fit everything into the the verse form you might have to have certain inaccuracies but I think I would like to read that one I haven't haven't read it I have seen one copy of it in my life but those are the only real notable

translations of the Su that I can think
of and with regard to just
accuracy um of of meaning probably aan
tanero or uh bkub body but uh like like
reproducing the spirit of what you would
experience when reading the original
inverse maybe Lord chalmers's and uh KR
Norman I mean he's nothing to sneeze
your nose out he's he's definitely
really well well versed in in the poly
language and in ancient procrit
languages in
general but he really he's he's not good
at trying to make sense of Buddhist
philosophy because he just really
doesn't get it and even with biku bod I
mean he doesn't really practice much

that I'm that I'm aware of you know he
notoriously doesn't meditate and you
he's just a scholar you know he's
dedicated his energies to translating
and mastering the poly language but when
you get into the deep stuff

I he's just going to defer to the
commentaries in most cases so aan Tanis
I think would be more reliable in that
case so anyways um I'm gonna move on to
the next question which is the last
question the very last one and this one
was right under the wire this is just a
little while ago today this is from
tiggles and tiggles says why is your
Discord status always set to do not

disturb and that was I mean that's
relative ly recent I used to have it on
the yellow which was I don't know what
what yellow stands for but uh there was
like a bunch of back and forth there was
one guy who joined the Discord server
who was kind of a a leftist who was like
debating with everybody and it was if
you don't put it on red you don't put
your computer on do not disturb it just
keeps beeping you just keep getting
getting these notifications just one
after another after another after
another I was just getting tired of my
computer just beeping all the time with
like two people on the Discord server
just going back and forth back and forth

so I just said it to do not
disturb um just so that I would not be
disturbed by all the beeping from the
notifications from just two people or
sometimes more than two people in some
heated debate in one of the Discord
rooms just going back and forth and
that's it that's that's the last
question that's the last answer to the
last question and I'm done so if you got
any questions you feel free to to ask
them their questions and I will endeavor
to answer them and uh hit like smash
that like button I'm supposed to be
animated when I say that but it's just I
just have this urge to say smash that

like

button and uh subscribe if you haven't
already and look at the URL links some
two people have asked where they can buy
my books and the whole time they're down
just in the like the description below
this you have to click on see more or
whatever and uh you know the whole thing
opens up and the at the bottom of the
URL links are uh the links to the three
books that I've got um on

Amazon and

uh be

happy

hello and welcome to episode

73b of question and answer I am your

host pel Basel and this is I'm gotta

make sure here okay it's recording this

is called

73b because I did this entire Q&A

yesterday which lasted about two hours

and at the end of it I realized that for

some reason it didn't

record and I think it's because I've got

like two different kinds of soft where

running at the same time that getting

each other's way one is like sound

quality for the mic and the other one is

the video stuff and it's just not good

this is the second time this has

happened but anyways on with the show
because I think it's recording I'll look
again yep yep it's
recording so some of you may have
noticed that this is the holiday season
in fact we are in the midst of
saturnalia and tomorrow at the time of
recording this is the Fe feast day of
Saul and
vicus so I'm studiously avoiding any
christmy
backgrounds and filming this in my
bedroom our bedroom I should say not
mine and yours of course silly but mine
and my
sweethearts so I guess I should just
wait into this and start answering

questions

again and the first question is from
rajer kumara and Roger kumara says are
ter arada monks allowed to watch movies
when they travel in the plane if they do
does it break any
preset

well there is a rule against a monk
making effort to listen to music or
making effort to watch entertainment
shows so back in the old days when I
would ride a plane and they had the
screens like mounted up high you could
just sit there and watch the
movie because you weren't making any
special effort you're going to be riding

that plane

anyway but then later they started requiring earphones to listen to the movie just in case somebody else didn't want to listen to the movie and then that would be making a special effort and so I would watch the movie as a silent movie without subtitles or anything and sometimes the nice flight attendant bless her heart would come up and explain to me that if I put on the earphones I could hear the movie but it would be at least back in my strict monk days it would have been the violation of a Duca offense the commission of a Duca offense so I didn't do it and then after that then finally just every seat back

has like a movie screen and you can pick which which movie you want to watch and so uh when it got to that point I pretty much just started becoming a LAX Monk and occasionally watched a movie while one of during one of my many trips back and forth across the Pacific Ocean so that was kind of like the beginning of the end for me I guess was when I started watching movies on airplanes thereby committing a minor uh ecclesiastical offense watching and listening I mean back in my stre days I used to make a special request like I was it going to ride a bus from Southern

Burma to Upper Burma which is like a
nightl long offense or yeah well it
practically is offense it's just like a
nightl long ordeal

so I would I would specifically request
I want to ride a bus that doesn't have
movies and burmes movies pretty much
suck

anyway and so I'd wind up on this bus
that was like part like cargo transfer
I'd be like sitting on a bag of rice
with somebody's foot in my ear and
there'd be like a kid two seats back
just puking his guts out for the past
hour and my barefoot it's in some kind
of liquid and I'm so crammed in there
that I can't even bend forward enough to

see what my foot is in I'm hoping that
it's just like transmission fluid or
something and not the the puke from the
kid two seat's

back so I did that for a while and then
finally I kind of gave up on that and
just rode the regular buses and then of
course you watch crappy Burmese
movies and the monks get to sit up front
on the bus too so I'd be right up there
with the TV

screen but

uh I digress I'm I'm digressing wildly
so getting back to the to the uh
question here um terraa monks are
allowed to watch

movies um so long as they're not making a special effort or if the movie is like a spiritually oriented movie like maybe some kind of educational documentary with some kind of Dharma involved then it'd probably be okay but making a special effort to to listen to music or to watch entertainment shows is against the rules for a monk so I'll just move on to the next question and this is from Ken and Ken always reminds me of kazin which is a kind of alien race in um Larry nien stories but I assume Ken is human partly just because he spells his name differently and he says I assume it to

he have you heard the story that Steve
Jobs named Apple after neim karoli
Baba's favorite fruit interesting if
true brings uh interesting if true
beings that apple is the most ubiquitous
company on Earth carrying on a certain
essence of baba um no I've never heard
that story until Ken here divulged it to
me um I did watch the movie about Steve
Jobs in which apparently the name Apple
just was like off the top of somebody's
head while they were driving in a car
it's just hey let's just call it
Apple so um it is true though I mean
movies aren't necessarily
accurate and so uh yeah it may be that

Steve Jobs was a a a fan of neem coroli
Baba if not a voy and uh named it after
NE curly Baba's favorite fruit because
there were a lot of apples passing back
and forth around neim coroli Baba if uh
you can believe what ROM da says about
it

although NE cly Baba did like other
kinds of fruit too he did eat
pomegranates occasionally for
example but uh yeah I never heard the
story and so I'm just I'm just going to
move on to the next question because we
got quite a lot of questions which is
pretty much as usual lately and I should
point out now that from now on it's
going to be three questions each and

pray that I do not reduce the number further so this next question is from Toronto and Toronto says what's the significance of Christmas in the alt Buddhist worldview how should Western Buddhists go about observing Christmas celebrations well I assume there's more than one alt Buddhist worldview that different alt Buddhists will have different worldviews and thus different interpretations of the significance of Christmas but for the most part Christmas is a secular institution is just a secular Feast Day in the West in the secular West that uh it being the birthday of Jesus is really of secondary

importance to most Americans I'm pretty sure so I mean you can celebrate

Christmas as a

Buddhist um maybe not so much

celebrating the birthday of Jesus when

and Christmas Day in all likelihood is

not the birthday of Jesus

because I have read that the first

recorded celebration of Christmas was

like in

May and then it got changed to

January 6th or 8th something like that

and I think the Greek Orthodox

Christians still celebrate it as January

6th or 8th or something but then in the

western half of the Roman Empire as the

the empire in general was converting to

Christianity they decided Well let's
just ease

some Christianity into the the feast
calendar by replacing the feast day of
Sol en victus with
Christmas

so December

25th uh was and still is I suppose to a
lot of pagans the feast day of Solen
vicus and

so but I I should say that to be fair to
the Christians I mean the standard
Buddhist Day celebrating the the
birthday of the Buddha himself probably
that was not his real birthday either
it's I consider it statistically very

unlikely that the Buddha was born became
Enlighten became enlightened and died
all on the full moon of
May so there's no like ancient poly text
saying that the Buddha was born on the
full moon of May so it's just a later
traditional thing you don't know when
his birthday is you want to celebrate
his birthday any anyway so you just pick
a day Christians pick the feast day of
Solen vicus and the Buddhists picked the
traditional day on which the Buddha
became
enlightened so getting back to the
question because I'm digressing just
spasmodically
here um I mean Christmas as a secular

institution fine it's it's nice to give
gifts Christmas trees are pretty you
know no problem there um how should
Western Buddhists go about observing
Christmas celebrations well you should
watch how How the Grinch Stole Christmas
it's a good Christmas movie and there's
no mention at all of Jesus getting born
it's just a nice movie about how
Christmas is like a matter of attitude
Christmas is a state of mind that it's
not all about getting presents which of
course many children would consider to
be vile
heresy
but I'm let's assume that we're not

small children here so I'm just going to move on to the next question this is from covax and sead zida and covac andad zida says I have a theory based on my reading of the sutas it seems as if nibana is always used as a verb to mean extinguishment in the early sutas nibana element with remainder is the extinguishment of the three poisons well the nibana element without remainder is the extinguishment of of the five Aggregates I talked to someone that speaks Bengali and he says that's how the word is used in his language even today and as an aside I've I've been told that it's the same in Nepal in the Nepali Language anyways I continue like

when you turn off the light use the they
use the word

nibana but in the later Traditions the
word nibana was used for what is

referred to as the deathless element

that realm the unpr olifer thus can't be
referred to Etc but Iana was never used

for this in the sutas they are just
closely associated and maybe later

tradition confused the specific

differences of the two concepts do you

think this makes sense or are there

examples that go counter to this

hypothesis yeah there actually are quite

a few examples that go counter to that

but getting back up towards the top of

covac and sead zona's theoretical
question here he says uh nibana was um
always used as a verb but actually the
verb would be ni to blow out niana is
like a verbal noun it's the Anna at the
end of a poly word is like ing in
English so it would be like skiing as a
noun so you know his his coughing is
really bothering me so coughing there
would be a verbal noun you know his
coughing

so um yeah I mean it is kind of a verbal
noun

and a lot of the time nibana it as an
ethical term you know it's referring to
you know the attaining of Enlightenment
but nibana as like the deathless state

is found in very early texts also for example there's that um vestigial just that fragment that's found in the dean Kaya and the majaya referring to um you know infinite consciousness that's luminous all around you know it's formless and I mean that's that's a very ancient fragment that has found its way into two different sutas also in the udana for example there are a number of descriptions of nibana you know where the sun doesn't shine the moon doesn't glow the Stars don't twinkle you know earth water Wind and Fire Gain No foothold like for example in the inspired utterance at the

end of udana 110 which is the Bahia sua
you know that's also relatively very old
Buddhism you know very old text but
again it's referring to nibana as a kind
of metaphysical state so nibana as a
kind of ethical attainment and nibana as
like the metaphysical state that the
attainment attains are both pretty
common in going all the way back to the
oldest text we've
got
so

I guess I answer that question by golly
so I'll just move on to the next
question from seak and sead
Zona after I take a sip of bovine
glandular

secretions so he says which side of the argument are you on is it alone like a rhinoceros or is it alone like a rhinoceros is horn and yeah I'm in the latter Camp I think it means alone like the horn of a rhinoceros and there are two reasons for that one is that the Indian rhinoceros or so I've been told is not particularly solitary and second the Indian rhinoceros has only one horn as opposed to African rhinoceroses that have two

horns and most animals that have horns have two horns you know or antlers you know cow has two water buffalo has two deer have two antlers most animals with

horn have two a pair of them you know
you got like a mated pair you know
almost like a boy antler and a girl
antler but the rhinoceros having only
one horn I mean that's that's indicative
that the rhinoceroses horn does not have
a mate you know it goes
alone so I assume that the kaga sua kega
literally means sword Horn uh referring
to the horn and to the rhinoceros that
is the bearer of this sword horn horn um
I think it's emphasizing the solitary
nature of the rhinoceros which has only
one horn as opposed to most horn animals
that have
to so I'll just move on to seov action
sead Z's next question

here what is the significance of the term datag it seems like originally this was the name used during the Buddha's actual life time even by himself rather than Buddha the context of asking for its significance is that of its meaning and how it relates to the broader culture on top of just the dhama because there are sutas where people of other Traditions are asked about the condition of a Daga after death alongside other questions like of the universe or if the universe is infinite and such but this wouldn't make any sense if there wasn't a general concept of a Daga that was shared among all Traditions or the

culture at large so this is kind of two questions one is what is the significance of the term dagat you know what does it mean I guess and the second is uh with regard to whether Daga was a specifically Buddhist term or whether it was common in the spiritual culture of Northern India in the Buddhist time so what Daga means according to my interpretation it's there's a number of different interpretations but my interpretation I think my interpretation is correct otherwise it wouldn't be my interpretation is that it's the combination of two words dat and AATA dat means like this or such and it's referring to

essentially the enlightened State and that was common in early Buddhism that would use a term like T or tadi is another one that's found in the Ana waga which just means like like this or such because it's how you put into words something that can't be put into words so and then AATA means it's the past participle of aach which means to come or it could also mean to become so the tagata is he who has become thus you know he who has attained the state of suchness and uh whether it was common to other like philosophical or spiritual traditions in Ancient India I don't know for sure I can't remember ever seeing

Daga is like the Upanishadic literature or
the Bhagavad Gita or Jaina literature
although in I mean the only ancient
Indian language that I read in the
original is
Pali so I mean there might be stuff in
Sanskrit that gets translated into
English you know away from in a way that
you wouldn't recognize it as daga but
I'm pretty sure daga is found only in
Buddhist texts so it may be that it's a
kind of
anachronism or a paraphrase you know
somebody comes and asks if an
enlightened being still exists after
death and then in the Buddhist text they
just say does the daga exist after

death um when it may be that the the
person that that asked the question used
a different word and it just got
paraphrased as the tagata but somebody
out there who has read a lot of Jane
literature or um Sanskrit literature if
they like non- Buddhist Sanskrit
literature if they've seen the word
tagata out there then that's nice that's
that's fine they can say it they can
point it out in the comments or
something but um I think it may be a
like a uniquely Buddhist term so I'll
just move on to the next question here
this is from lib Lam and it's like three
questions combined into

one so Libra Lam says if an alien or
supernatural being could reproduce with
a human to make a near human even if if
we knew they came from other worldly
Origins would they need to be judged by
their physical characteristics to
disqualify for ordination as monks could
they hypothetically ordain and how do
you think world religion would change if
the heroic godman like Jesus Aras or
Odin took on dharmic lives and
Legacies so let's see the first question
first sub question is if an alien or
supernatural being could re reproduce
with a human to make a near human even
if we knew that they came from other
worldly Origins would they need to be

judged by their physical characteristics
to disqualify for ordination as monks um
I think we can set aside aliens because
ancient I mean the ancient polyc really
don't have much concept of space aliens
um other than supernatural beings like
dvas or

brahmas and I don't like in in ancient
Greece and ancient Rome you had demigods
who were like half God and half human
you know like Achilles for

example um but I guess he would still be
considered human Achilles would still be
considered human even though he was born
to a

goddess um and in Ancient India I don't

think they really have a concept of demigods other than they have a concept of like avatars like Krishna was an avatar of Vishnu so and according to the Hindus even the Buddha was an Avatar of Vishnu but it would be sort of like the spirit of a god inhabiting briefly my God standards the the physical body of a human and so the the physical body would be

human like Krishna was human in addition to being Divine sort of like a lot of Christians say that Jesus was human in addition to being

Divine um so yeah it's a tricky question and I don't know if the texts really make an issue of it whether in the Venia

texts you know they're they deal with
the the situation of you know whether
half God half human would be allowed to
be ordained um just just be looking
human isn't good enough because there is
a story about a Naga which is like a a
fire breathing Cobra dragon that can
shapeshift and assume human form and has
essentially human intelligence it
assumed human form and was ordained as a
monk but then when it fell asleep it
reverted back to its Naga form and then
when the monks found out about it um the
Buddha told him I mean you're not really
ordained you're going to have to go
because only humans can be can be

monks so even though he assumed human
form that wasn't good
enough but exactly where you would draw
the line I guess we're going to have to
have vinia Scholars Hammer this out and
come to a decision at the next buddist
counsel so I guess I'll just move on to
the next question this is from Cool Whip
oh wait wait wait wait wait no no we're
not going to do that because there was
the other let's see
here there's the last part of this
question by lib Lam that I haven't
answered yet how do you think world
religion would
change if the heroic God man like Jesus
arus or

Odin took on dharmic lives and Legacies
well that's kind of a strange question
because I'm pretty sure Jesus at least
did take on a dharmic Life and
Legacy I mean not like Sanskrit Dharma
but I mean he was like a renunciant and
he lived more or less of a yogic life
apparently he attained psychic
powers so and arun if he's referring to
the hares Arun then he was probably
a relatively spiritual person
too I really can't say with regard to
Odin I'm not familiar with his um his
mythology and or whether or not there
really was a human origin to Odin that
I've been told that Odin may have just

been a God and then got accused of just
being uh glorified Human by later
Christians so yeah I mean the heroic God
man he took on dharmic lives and
Legacies um yeah I don't really fully
understand understand that question
because I'm pretty sure at least Jesus
of the three examples here did take on a
dharmic Life and
Legacy although I mean the followers of
Jesus um pretty much cast aside all the
renunciation stuff and uh they just
worship
Jesus so but there are a lot of
Buddhists like that
too so I think I answered that question
even though I don't completely

understand that part that third part
there how world religion would change if
the heroic God man took on dharmic lives
and

Legacies some of them do far as I can
tell so I'll just move on next question
now for real this time this is from Cool
Whip and Cool Whip says oh coip has like
little headers over each question it's
each question has a title so the title
of the first question is relationship
between mind and matter and he says what
is the relationship on how a non-phys
physical process mind can affect a
physical processed external
reality reality and I'm going to check

make sure this is really recording this
time God I hope it is but there was like
a little I mean it looked like it was
recording last time

too so gosh if it's not really recording
I'm I'm diddled

essentially so let's see what is the
relationship on how a non-physical
process can affect a physical process
well I'm not on materialist I do not
believe that physical matter is

ultimately real in fact I've I've said a
number of times that the next cernic
revolution in science may be the
realization that what a psychologist
calls Consciousness or mind is is a very
complicated form of what a physicist

calls energy and that's probably already the case but it's also vice versa that what a physicist calls energy is really just a an elemental extremely simple form form of what a psychologist would call mind or Consciousness so that would make the entire universe a kind of manifestation of

mind um and also I mean there's like the pH philosophy of Spinoza who is saying that mind and matter are both real in a sense but they're both ultimately the same and that's kind of what what I would say

also so I really don't see that there really is a problem my interpretation

kind of shoots in the head the uh the
Mind Body problem because the body
doesn't ultimately exist I mean you
could argue the mind doesn't either but
um at least we have direct access to
mind we do not have direct access to
matter there's no way to prove that
physical matter really exists which
Emanuel Kant considered to be the
scandal of
philosophy

so yeah I guess I answered that one I
think I answered it better the first
time in the the one that you didn't get
to see because it didn't record and I I
sincerely hope it's recording for real
this

time so cool Whip's next question has
the title extrapolation of karma a mind
matter

reversal and the question is the reality
of karma one is able to see or infer in
the present moment is different from the
reality of karma from One Life to the
next for example when you commit an evil
action you can see the karmic imprint on
your mind in the present moment purely
mental and the mental physical effect of
that evil action has to wait till the
later lifetimes Karma means action or
intention but beyond the present moment
the extrapolation of karma are like
mental and physical reverses as in

Reverse action a greedy mind is reborn
into an impoverished external reality
despite intending on having more a
generous kind loving mind is reborn into
abundant external conditions despite
intending on giving up if a greedy mind
is included is inclined to have to
having more why wouldn't it be reborn
into abundance and a Content person into
humble conditions you need some
irrational faith in the karma reversal
currency of Merit well I do think there
are some kind of misconceptions here
first of all there really is no past
Karma or present or future Karma there's
only present Karma because according to
Orthodox terada only the present moment

exists the past no longer exists the
future doesn't exist yet therefore they
are

unreal all comma is present comma and

it's not necessarily the case that

something that you do in this life is

necessarily going to have effects in a

future life I mean it can have

instantaneous effects you know you get

mad you kick something and you hurt your

foot that's like an instantaneous effect

of your karma of of just being pissed

off and kicking

something so

so let's see here also it seems he's

referring to a kind of reverse action

where a greedy mind is reborn into an impoverished external reality but that's not necessarily the case I mean karma is like Mo the momentum of your mental energy and if you're really into acquiring stuff you know you're a greedy person that doesn't mean that you're just going to be punished the next time around it's I um by being poor I mean it could be that you're you're just building up this momentum and I mean apparently a lot of people do have a lot of karmic momentum in a certain direction like Mozart was composing Symphonies when he was a little kid because apparently he had a lot of parmy or just accumulated momentum in a

musical Direction before he was even
born and so it may be that a greedy mind
is can be reborn into like wealth for
example but then the suffering comes
from the wealth you know it's like
a lot of Rich parents they've got kids
that are just you know Hunter Biden
types or or or junkies or whatever and
it's like their own desire for all this
stuff just kind of backfires on them or
if you're lucky then you're reborn
you're born into wealth and you get
everything you want and you have the
wisdom to realize that you're still not
satisfied so also here A Generous kind
loving mind is reborn into abundant

external conditions not necessarily
though I mean um it depends on the
individual it's like it's like what you
need is gonna
happen so I mean like St John of the
Cross possibly my favorite Christian I
mean he was a saintly person very wise
person but his childhood just sucked and
it was like he was when he was full
grown he was only like 4 foot¹ due to
malnutrition as a child in all
likelihood he had had a brother who died
in childhood they think possibly due to
malnutrition or just Flatout starvation
I mean there were his father died when
he was little and the the greater family
just disowned the the entire family

Spaniards in those days could be relatively harsh and cruel I guess and uh so he got sent to a school for Poor Boys where he could get a free education but it wasn't 100% free because he had to work to earn his education and even as a little kid he was working in a plague hospital so he's carrying like buckets of puke and and diarrhea and stuff from people dying of plague when he's a little kid and he just got slammed into sainthood it seems like it was like some people are born saintly others attain saintliness and some have saintliness thrust upon him and uh I think St John of the Cross just

had saintliness thr rust upon him but it was due to his karma and it was like what he needed I guess so good people can have uh a lot of harrowing ordeals just because that's what they need for their their

karmic like I I don't want to say retribution but it's just for you know everything to like

seek um equilibrium you know karma is always heading towards

equilibrium but then we keep making new

Karma you know it's like Paul Lo says

you know the system is self-healing

except that it's all the time we're

adding this new Karma that maintains the

dis

equilibrium so yeah it's not necessarily the case that if you're greedy you're going to be born poor and if you're generous you're going to be born rich I mean it can just be the exact opposite it depends on that your unique combination of karmic factors and it's too complicated to predict really so I think I'll just move on to cool Whip's next question which is entitled society and silence how does one live in a social reality when their minds become empty of words as silent beings well I've read in the biography of Shri arobindo that he was in a state of

non-thinking even when he was writing books and talking to people and I do think that is possible where you don't have to think about what you're going to do it just spontaneously flows out of you

like if you're dancing you're really good at dancing you don't have to be thinking about what your next step's going to be it just

flows and it can be that way with talking and so forth even without the internal dialogue formulating what you're going to say it just comes out but let's let's just assume that that's [__] and um this like assuming that that is not the case when

your mind becomes empty of words the
silent beings I mean uh yeah I guess
you'd renounce the world world
or um in I think it's theang
zuang says that um uh if you're born
into a human body you just are obligated
to behave like a human just because
you're surrounded by humans and that's
the way you get along in in this
life um on the other hand I'm getting
back to the silent beings rahen am
mahashi when he had his attainment as a
teenager it took him years before he was
finally able to integrate this voidness
with the samsaric empirical world so he
was like mute for few years before he

was finally able to gradually integrate
the two
visions so to
speak but uh how does one live in a
social reality I assume it just happens
spontaneously if you're Advanced enough
that you don't need to think anymore or
I mean if you do think you're mindful of
the thinking you know let's say there's
a situation where you just have to think
in words or symbols then You' do it
mindfully and you wouldn't be identified
with the the words and symbols you
wouldn't be identified with the thinking
that it would just be nature taking its
course because that's what your brain
naturally does and you like the center

of your Consciousness would not be there
you know you'd be just kind of sitting
back observing it

all or something so I'll just move on to
Kip's next question here on Buddhist
metaphysics do all Buddhist Traditions
share the same metaphysics of no self or
do each have an interpretation of no
self are the differences ultimately down
to what mind and matter are if not then
what well I mean even the Theravada
tradition has more than one explanation
of no self just because no self is
troublesome it's difficult to understand
it's kind of counterintuitive hard to
wrap your head around sometimes and so

different sub Traditions within terada
even within the sutas have different
explanations of no self for example the
uh anat luta the Buddha's second
discourse according to tradition after
his

Enlightenment um I mean he's saying that
essentially the argument is if you don't
have control over it it's not you so
like with regard to the five condas that
make up a human being the five

Aggregates you can't say with regard to
any of them let it be this way let it
not be that way and have it reliably
happen that's even with regard to um
saraka which is essentially volition I
mean you're not even in complete control

of your own

volitions but then there's also like the
the famous Chariot the simile of the of
the

Chariot which is another explanation of
no self that that a self is just a term
of convenience describing an Ever
Changing adjustable assemblage of of
constituent parts

but then when you get into Abid dama one
of the arguments is that anything that
can be divided down into smaller parts
cannot be considered um an individual
entity a

dhama and that's one argument that the
Mahayana Buddhists especially the maamaa

Buddhist used against the Abid Dharma
Scholars by saying that um you know
anything no matter how far down it gets
divided you got like this atomic
particle of some bless or something you
know just can it's like according to the
older schools it can't be divided down
any further but still in Mahayana you
say well it's still going to have a top
half and a bottom half it's going to
have a beginning and an end so you can
divide that at least in your mind and I
mean dividing something at least in your
mind is valid from a Terra Vaden point
of view because there are some things
that cannot arise separately even though
they're considered to be two different

things like volition and perception for example they have to Arise at the same time always they cannot be divided in reality but still they consider they're considered to be two different things and so you can say well the top half and the bottom half are also different because I mean they got obviously top half is not the same as bottom half

so I think in the older Traditions they were referring to a subjective self like a soul an individual personality that is really an individual whereas when you get into Mahayana Buddhism it becomes

even it becomes a broader or even
objective selves you know any any kind
of objective object at all lacks an
intrinsic self

Essence so let's see here see if I'm
answering this question if I've
digressed again do all Buddhist

Traditions share the same metaphysics of
no self um no like I was saying the
Mahayana Buddhists are more metaphysical
and they're just applying no self even
to like the basic particles constituents
of saric reality that for example Abid
dama says is

real so are the differences ultimately
down to what mind and matter are or if
not then what it's it's not so much mind

and matter it's just a matter of individual self Essence which Buddhism denies there is no individual self Essence except according to Abid dama in these like Atomic constituents of samsaric reality but Mahayana even denies the existence of those so I guess I answered that question it's not easy question to discuss I guess so I'll just move on to the next question this is from Joe do and Joe do says do you believe that people's psychic energy can manifest in your body as headaches or other bodily Sensations and I would say sure I mean if you're in a room with somebody who's

just like losing their cool they're just losing their [__] they're freaking out then that's going to have an effect on everyone around them they might not even be directing it at you they might be freaking out at somebody else but still it's there's going to be this it's just going to be permeating the atmosphere and it's going to have an effect on you um I'm reminded of ROM Doss in one of his book saying that he had a teacher in India who if he ate food that was cooked by someone who was angry he would become violently ill just because of like The Vibes in the food so he is very sensitive to like the bad moods of other people for

example um but yeah mental states are contagious which is one of the main reasons why in the mongalo suo the list of the 38 great blessings in life blessing number one is not associating with fools because mental states are contagious and their toxic mental states are going to affect you

so yeah I do believe that people's psychic energy can manifest in your body as headaches or other bodily sensations so I guess I'll just uh move on to the next question here and this is from Crave minerals and I sincerely hope this is really recording this time I'm just

putting it out there

this is from Crave minerals and crave minerals says if somebody if someone close to you is going through a sort of meaning crisis for example a Christian struggling with faith and approaching the end of life being overcome with doubt and fear and you wish to somehow alleviate their worries however slightly what would a good Buddhist do I recognize that this loss of faith is not really something that can be helped and is after all a personal matter and a healthy thing to question in the long run but I just wish they could somehow feel

better and yeah with regard to a person

struggling with their own faith I mean that's entirely internal to them it seems um and I mean the best you can do is just be compassionate be honest you know I mean sometimes I mean I don't know each person having a problem like this is it's going to be a unique thing and so I can't just say well you should say say this that and the other thing because it will depend on the on the individual um I am reminded that uh ROM do again in one of his books is talking about how his father when he got old was kind of having a he's struggling with faith in his own self you know he's just start starting to see himself as a

failure who wasted his life doing the wrong things and ROM do you know fresh from India he's uh just hanging out with his dad and just being grounded in the present moment and he's talking about how once they were making Jam or something and his father is just sort of like doing these monologues about what a failure his life has been and so forth and ROM dos is just saying well I mean should we put this much sugar in it or or like how much pectin do we need and he's just staying like in the present moment it's not like he's ignoring his father it's just that he's trying to remain in the present moment as a kind of I don't know like an anchor or

something you know just trying to ground
the the situation to some degree
and uh at least it helped his father
feel a little more comfortable because
he's just lost in all the speculative
stuff whereas I mean the reality if we
can call it a reality is just right here
and

now but uh I mean if they're losing
their faith in Christianity I mean if
you're not a if you're not a Christian I
mean you can point out that I
mean you know I'm not a Christian I'm
doing fine apparently but I mean if they
think that they're going to burn in hell
for not being Christian then they

haven't really lost their faith have
they

so I'm not exactly sure what you would
tell somebody in this in a situation
like this I my own grandmother was had a
like a a catastrophic loss of faith when
she was very old like in her

90s um but I wasn't there I mean I
wasn't there to do anything about it you
know I just heard about it secondhand
you know long afterwards but she was
just a devout Bible thumping Southern
Baptist Christian who then later in life
converted over to seventh day
adventism and you know Jesus is coming
and I mean she was just really into it
and then finally she got started getting

mad at God because he would not take her
she just kept getting older and older
and older and more and more feeble and
just wouldn't

die and she wanted to just go to heaven
and you know be with you know her love
loved ones and so forth and God just
wouldn't take her and finally she just
got pissed off at him and just kind of
lost her faith in that way but um yeah
again I'm just I'm babbling here uh

crave minerals I'm not exactly sure what
you would say other than just be
compassionate and honest and try to
remain grounded and try not you know
getting lost in this ephemeral

theoretical stuff that maybe is what
they are lost

in so I'll just move on to the next
question this is from Crave minerals
also he says how do you feel about
Buddhists that talk about God for
example I saw

Titan talked quite gracefully about God
and nibana in the same breath below is a
quote to show you what I mean quote God
as the ground of being cannot be
conceived of Nirvana also cannot be
conceived of if we are aware when we use
the word Nirvana or the word God and
that we are talking about the ground of
being there is no danger in using these
words and I I admit I've done the same

thing like if you're trying to explain spirituality from a Buddhist Point of View to a Christian you don't use poly terms they won't I mean you use words that they can understand and so you know you talk about the spirit of God that pervades all things and like a Buddhist in a sense is you're trying to not be distracted by all this worldly stuff so that you just see through through the spirit of God that pervades all things and I mean it's kind of skillful means it's at least they're using a way of communicating that they can sort of get an idea of what you're talking about so I mean and then when you when

you get into like

want what what they're talking about is

God and and and what Buddhists talk

about as nibana the difference is mainly

verbal it's just stic antic really I'm

pretty

sure that the sages who experienced

Brahman and the sages who experienced

Nirvana were I mean they're just trying

to use different paradigms you know

different cultural explanations for

describing the same thing and

so the Hindus are more into describing

it you know as as something Divine and

like God because that's the the vadic

tradition is is pretty much

theocentric

so yeah I don't I don't really see any danger in that so long as you're not using God as you know the angry old man that lives in the sky and you know he's got a chosen people and he gets pissed off a lot and smites people a lot and got the Angels flittering around his feet like butterflies and so forth um yeah so long as you're not thinking of God as a kind of cosmic Santa Claus except wearing a white suit instead of a red one and not nearly so jolly then I mean so long as you're you're using God pretty much in a like a vonic sense of just reality or even a lot of theology like Catholic theology really their God

is just an
abstraction so yeah I so long as you
keep in mind what you're doing then uh I
think you're doing okay if you just
Define God as reality and you Divi
Divine Define nirvana as reality then I
mean so long as you make it clear that's
what you're doing then uh I don't think
it's it's particularly
dangerous although a lot of hardnose
dogmatists May seriously take issue with
it so I'm just going to move on to the
next question this is from tiggles
formerly known as hey it's
TIG and tiple says any plans on having
aan Puna back on your
show and he's referring to about a year

ago Brian Rue aan Puna Damo and I were doing shows every it like every three weeks we do like one or two videos discussing various topics and then uh aan Puna some of aan puno's supporters began a kind of protest against aan pun associating with a known Nazi mainly Brian Rue I don't know to what extent if any I was involved in their protests it was mainly they were protesting against ajan Puna associating with Brian Rue and Brian R is a sincere Buddhist he's a good guy he's got some strange ideas but even so he's harmless and uh anyway that ended the the videos we were doing and then last

spring

um I emailed aan pun and asked him if maybe he and I could do some videos together and he was saying and he was explaining you know why he had to stop doing the videos with u Brian and me but he said maybe in the summer and then I never followed up he never followed up and it just didn't happen so yeah it's it's possible but uh it's it's kind of a shame that Brian can't be involved in it but because aan Puna said he didn't want to die on that Hill he has to choose his battles and uh just losing a lot of his supporters or some of his supporters because he refuses to stop doing videos with Brian Ru was just uh a little much

for

him so it's possible I don't

know so next next question is from NWO

games alert and I don't think NWO games

alert has asked questions before

or if he has or they have or she has um

they went by a different name and so in

their innocence they asked I think seven

questions

here and just just this once because

they're a newcomer maybe innocent of the

the new rules and the new rule the newer

new rule is three questions each three

shall be the number of the

count no more well look can be

less so anyways New World Order games

alert I mean the first questions are all
kind of related and they can be answered
relatively quickly so I'll just humor
new I almost said New World Order NWO
games

alert and the first question here is are
animals subject to Karma and
reincarnation if yes then explain how an
animal can sin gain merits or indulge in
morally good or bad behavior if no then
explain where in our Evolution from
animal to Human did humans begin to be
subjected to rebirth in karma where ostr
Opus chromagnon neandertal Homo erectus
Etc subject to reincarnation in the law
of of karma or is it only Homo sapiens
who is subject to Universal or Divine

moral laws so that's like three or four questions right there can telescoped into one um so the first part here is are animals subject to Karma and reincarnation yes any animal that has mentality evolved enough that it can have perceptions and volitions is going to make karma karma is volition and so from the Buddhist point of view even like Plankton like copapods in the ocean are going to be subject to Karma and reincarnation um personally I'm not sure that a copap pod really has uh volition and perception um it may be that some of the more advanced invertebrates like an

octopus does um and also in in like the
philm Cordata to which we belong you
know it go back at least as far as
fish like whether uh an an acorn worm
has Karma makes Karma or not I don't
know because I don't really know how
what kind of a mind an acorn worm
has

so see so if yes then explain how an
animal can sin gain merits or indulge in
morally good or bad Behavior well sin is
really not a Buddhist term that's more
of a Christian term um morally bad
behavior they can do a lot of which is
why animals from the Terra Buddhist
point of view are pretty much stuck in
the animal realm for a long time in fact

there's a sutra discussing how hard it is to get out of the animal realm once you're in there and it's you've got a yoke which goes around like the neck of an ox it's shaped sort of like a toilet seat I think think so let's just say toilet seat in order to convert it into something that you can easily understand so you got this toilet seat floating around on the ocean the vast ocean and there's this sea turtle who comes up for air once every hundred years to take a breath and so the odds of getting out of the animal realm once you're in it are about equivalent to the odds of that sea turtle just through

random chant coming up and poking his head up through the middle of the toilet seat as it floats on the surface of the ocean when it comes up to take a breath because according to Tibetan Buddhism animals really can't earn Merit or it's very rare and difficult for an animal to earn Merit but they earn demerit a lot just through like delusion they got a lot of greed hate and delusion and that's bad

karma but I do think that animals are more capable of getting good karma than Orthodox Buddhists claim you know there are stories of dolphins who are helping drowning swimmers Dolphins trying to help harpoon whales you know

they get on either side of the whale and help pushing it up so it can breathe and uh I mean even like a a mother chicken loving her chicks you can say it's just blind Instinct but in human beings also there's a lot of blind Instinct involved in the maternal Instinct um just parental instincts I mean it's animal instincts and that doesn't make the love any less genuine even if it's conditioned by animal instincts and hormones and so forth and animals love their babies at least the ones that take care of their babies and uh you know they can be you know animals can show good

qualities I mean especially if you have
a dog and I mean it'd be a really
insensitive shallow person who would
think that a dog is just some kind of
automaton with no mind if you look into
a dog's eyes there isn't somebody
looking back at
you so

yeah so it's it is possible for an
animal to gain merits like for example
in even in the terab poly texts or it's
in the commentaries I think there's the
story of a frog who be went to heaven
and as the the Buddha was giving a
discourse and there's the Frog that's
just sitting there and it can't
understand the Buddhist words but it's

like the the

melodious like gentleness of the

Buddha's voice had this frog in a kind

of

like an for a frog anyway an exalted

mental state and it's just listening to

the sound of the Buddhist voice and

enjoying it as something beautiful and

then this shepherd with a a stick like

Shepherds used to have he just comes in

without even knowing it without without

seeing the Frog at all he just puts a

stick down on the Frog's head and

squishes the Frog's head and kills it

but because the Frog was in this exalted

mental state when it died it went up

into into heaven I think it went into
talwa timsa heaven and became the frog
god not Tech which is a different frog
god

so um I guess I've answered all these
questions because certainly ostr opines
and monkeys and tree shrews and reptiles
and so forth are making Karma that they
do you know they're subject to the same
laws as any other sentient

being so I'll just move on to NWO games
alerts next question here how soon after
death is a human reborn into continuous
existence in Sam SAR is there a fixed
waiting time a Bardo existence or a
heaven where they are stored together
with their

karma

um it's it has to be instantaneous going
with terraa Buddhism once once your life
stops in this life you know once once
you're you're brain dead so to speak
then the very next Moment Like A
trillionth of a second later you have to
take a rebirth somewhere
else and
uh I mean it's kind of a misconception
here he's talking about a heaven where
beings are stored together with their
karma because there are no beings to be
stored it's just the
karma that's all that is that that trans
it's all that transmigrates from One

Life to the next is just the the
momentum the psychic momentum of Karma
which causes the next rebirth and there
cannot be a break in it it's got to be
continuous it's this
stream sort of like schopenhauer's
will um there could be a kind of BTO
existence in that I mean the BTO
existence could just be sort of an
ephemeral temporary next life in between
this life and like the next long you
know like a human life or something
let's say it's your karma to be reborn
you know as a a royal Prince or
something there may be like a weight for
that or or who knows so I mean it can be
that you go through a kind of BTO BTO

existence like is described in the
Tibetan Book of the
Dead but uh that would just be its own
existence I mean it wouldn't be in
between existences that would be its own
existence so I'll just move on to uh NWO
Gamer's next question here is samsara on
planet Earth or are there other realms
planets or planes of existence where
samsara can unfold and Karma can take
its course and in parenthesis he's got
this question really is for Brian Rue
and this is an easy question Brian Rue
gets all the easy questions I
think is uh samsar is just Universal
it's just this Cosmos is samsara and

there are like an infinite number of
Worlds so if one world is destroyed then
you know the beings from that world will
go to a very similar world that that AR
isn't necessarily light years away in
space it can just be half an inch
sideways through
probability

although uh early Buddhism doesn't
really have a a concept of other
dimensions like you know the fifth
dimension of probability or
something but there are an infinite
number of

Worlds so let's see here next question
from NWO games alert pretty sure
yeah next

question the course of human existence
begins with a few Millions rapidly
expanding to billions trillions and then
endless myriads of
individuals through tens of thousands of
generations if reincarnation is a thing
how is it possible to find Space and
Time on Earth for these ever increasing
numbers to continue wandering in samsara
in order to fulfill their Destiny and
reach liberation

well there's at least two different ways
of explaining this one is what I just
said the many world's hypothesis that
there are an infinite number of Worlds
and one world is destroyed you know it's

like some of those uh beings will just be reborn in this world as almost like refugees or something but also it could be that most humans just haven't been human for very long that we came from some other realm like came up from the animal realm or from some Spirit realm or something and that may help to explain why there seem to be so many NPCs walking around um just you know complete normies with hardly an original thought in their head uh it does remind me of a story by JD Salinger called Teddy about this kid born into a dysfunctional family in New York City who just happens to be enlightened

and his sister is just horrible his
little his kid sister is just this
little monster and he's kind of speaking
up for her on on her behalf saying that
she just hasn't been a human for very
many lives you know she's still at a
crude state of humanity and I mean
that's another explanation another
possible explanation could be a
combination of the two so we'll just
move on to NWO games alerts last
question

here isn't Buddhism just like
Christianity in reality just a
collection of fairy tales when all comes
to all a bunch of crap useful for

certain purposes such as in the best case societal Harmony or worse just another scam useful for rulers and despots in order to keep people from engaging in violent revolts against their overlords and this is just a standard argument used by atheists against religion you know supposedly the enlightened atheist can see that all spirituality is just [_] and they just grossly misunderstand what spirituality is all about they just don't get it I'm not necessarily saying that NWO games alert belongs to this category but apparently he hasn't read many poly Texts because there's not a whole lot of fairy tales

in there I mean there are fairy tales in
the poly Tex which I have from the
beginning just

ignored because they're really not the
essence of the thing that's not what

Buddhism is about Buddhism is not based
on fairy tales it's not even based
really on a

narrative

so um some religions I suppose have been
formulated for the purpose of

controlling the masses like you know

you've got a warlord who declares

himself to be the mouthpiece of God and

that's happened at least twice among the

major religions that I can think of and

and like cult leaders it's happened even more times you know smaller scale um yeah I mean it's a way of controlling your followers by saying you know I'm speaking with the voice of God so you better do what I say but with Buddhism and even early Christianity I mean the original purpose was to renounce Society so I don't see how that is just a scam cooked up for the purpose of keeping keeping the PE in their place or even for societal Harmony really I mean when you're renouncing Society then I mean the best case of societal Harmony I mean even that seems to be largely irrelevant because some early religion

especially the more advanced ones
recognize that Society is just [__] up
and so if you really want to know
reality you go off alone into a desert
or into a forest and just
contemplate just turn
inwards
introspect
and yeah I I really don't know how the
the the cynical atheists would account
for that that that's how Buddhism began
that's how Christianity
began maybe not to the same extent as
Buddhism where it's just saying renounce
the world just go alone like the Horn of
the rhinoceros meditate under a tree in

a

Wilderness don't have anything to do

with with lay people in villages

I mean how is that there some sort of

scam cooked up by a

government

so yeah I i' I'd say no the answer the

quick answer to that question uh isn't

Buddhism just like Christianity in

reality just a collection of fairy tales

when all comes to all a bunch of crap

yeah that'd be no and I wouldn't even

say that was true of Christianity I mean

there's there is a lot of goodness in

Christianity but cynics will just point

to the bad stuff and say there you go

it's crap but I mean it's not so much

Christianity that is crap as just human nature that's got a lot of crap in it that when human beings TR you know even if they get they inherit an enlightened spiritual tradition they're likely to just turn into crap especially when it becomes mainstream and then you've got like ambitious like politician types getting in so that can control it you know it's like early Christianity once it once it went mainstream you've got this really corrupt politician types that are becoming Bishops and and and like Patriarchs and so forth um just because you know that's

their way to power and that happened and
it wasn't really the fault of Jesus or
the fault of the Buddha you know when
this sort of thing happens it's just
corrupt human

nature so so I think I'll just move on
to the next question here and this is
from oal and oal says my first question
was about Bobo on and if he had any
spiritual significance to you and in the
previous um the previous Q&A I pointed
out Bobo on who's on my altar behind me
uh when I'm in the other room but I'm
not in that room but it would be right
right

there and Bobo on uh he doesn't have any
spiritual significance to me

you I I used to see little bboong images
on altars all through Burma Bobo on is
he's like second or third place for
personages that go onto Buddhist altars
I mean the Buddha is number one of
course and you know there are some other
ones like uh Shin OA goat but um Bobo an
he was an alchemist or a
waya and he was very powerful and he was
very much revered and he still is to
this day apparently due his his
commonness on on Buddhist altars because
in order to be a wayar or like
a an alchemist or wizard of the top rank
you've got to use like powerful you know
like the highest spiritual powers and

that's dhama I mean the most powerful
Alchemists and wizards are going to be
white because they're going to be kind
of channeling or tapping into
dhama which is the most power you know
has the most spiritual
power uh even though even so though I
mean the most famous story about Bobo
Ang was there was some lady who was
starting a business and she went to Bobo
Ang for his Blessing so that her
business could prosper and he just
whipped out his penis and slapped her
upside the head with it and then just
resheathed the penis and that was it
that was the blessing but apparently it
worked because uh

she got rich after that her her uh her
business really prospered so there must
have been something to it I
guess but uh let's see the the only
reason I've got that bobo on little
image is that I was at this Monastery
and it had this box of stuff that they
were just giving away free it was like
old DH books and stuff and there was
this little Bobo on image in there and
I'd seen Bobo on so many times and um I
don't know I just I just correct it it
was for free distribution just put it on
my
alter so I think I'll just move on to
oil alts next

question which is as follows and these are these questions are all in the past tense because he asked once before and it somehow got disappeared off YouTube which happens uh pretty frequently so then he says I asked if during mediation the most common typo for Buddhists is is typing mediation instead of Med meditation I asked if during meditation if you ever experienced your Consciousness leave your body and experience a reality that appeared to be more realistic than this current reality well that's like a two-part question the first part no I've never experienced like an I never had an outof body experience during

meditation but the second part is did I
experience a reality that appeared to be
more realistic than this current reality
yeah which was like a mystical state it
wasn't some other world you know with
all this different stuff that was more
Vivid and and more lifelike more
realistic whatever that means but um
just the mystical State itself is
definitely more realistic than this
Dreamscape that we're living in with all
like doors and windows and
shirts so it was it was a mystical state
that was nondifferentiated that was just
Crystal so
clear anyway I guess I'll just move on

to oils third and last question here my
final question was in Bine glandular is
bovine glandular secretion your favorite
beverage and I am drinking it

now but I wouldn't say that I even have
a favorite beverage like if I could only
drink one thing for the rest of my life
it wouldn't be milk because I don't know
it's like sometimes you're just not in
the mov for

milk so I don't know what it' be some
kind of fruit juice

maybe there used to be this this stuff I
used to drink a lot when I was a young
man before I was a monk called it was
Dharma juice it was the company was
called Dharma juice and it was cold

pressed apple cranberry cider which was really

good so I mean they don't make it anymore they got bought out by some big Corporation but uh yeah if if I just had through magical means an infinite supply of that then that might be the only thing I would drink if I was forced to drink only one thing but then again I might just go for water or something so I I do like milk but um yeah I wouldn't want to I don't know I don't think it's my favorite I mean it is nice I'm not gonna badmouth milk here you're not going to see me bad mouth and milk on my own

videos anyway I'll just move on to the next question here this is from pranav and Prav says what's your opinion on venerable Maham molana fighting Nando panand Naga isn't it surprising that a monk fight well the Buddha himself also had a duel with a fire fire breathing Cobra dragon and it seems to have been pretty common in the the first few years of the the Buddha Sasa that you would have some enlightened Sage facing off against the fire breathing Cobra dragon and it wasn't like a fight like a violent fight like St George slaying the dragon it was more a matter of you've got um like an enlightened being you've got a great Sage who has great psychic

power and his psychic power is more powerful than the psychic power of the fire breathing dragon that allows it to shape shift and and breathe fire and so forth that it's it's considered to be a matter of psychic power powers that a cobra cobra Dragon breathes fire so it's sort of

like the Buddha or Mahamogana is like the sun and this Cobra dragon is like a candle in broad daylight and it just the sunlight just overwhelms the candle flame so you can hardly even see it on on a bright day so and then and then that's kind of symbolized by at the end of The Duel the the sage either the

Buddha or mamana or somebody else come
comes back to the to the populace with
this Cobra Dragon just reduced to this
little wimpy snake about this big that
they're carrying in their alms
bow and personally I'm kind of skeptical
that there are shape-shifting fire
breathing Cobra dragons with human
intelligence that my theory is that the
belief in nagas and the belief in
dragons in general is evolved from
prehistoric Cobra Worship in maybe
Northwestern IND like the indis valley
civilization because I mean a cobra is
an impressive creature a king cobra can
get 18t long and when it stands up on
its high legs so to speak it can be six

feet high with a a hood like this wide
and it makes these weird c c c c kind of
sounds and if it bites you you die so
it's easy to see why people would start
revering them as as like magical beings
and start making offerings to them so
that they won't like get
bitten so yeah it wasn't really a
violent fight it was just the the power
the psychic power of the sage it just
drowns out the psychic power of the
snake and there are precedents like this
in in the poly Tex like for example the
origin of the meta sua comes from you
had a group of monks who were very
Advanced they move into this Forest to

meditate for the rain retreat and
because of their great psychic power the
tree dwelling devas the deities in this
for the nature deities they couldn't
exercise their own psychic powers like
the tree deities couldn't even levitate
up into their trees because their own
power was just so drowned out and
overwhelmed by the psychic power of
these

monks so I mean that's that's kind of
the mechanics of how it
works and personally I think these
stories of Buddhist sages overwhelming
fire breathing dragons was a kind of
religious propaganda probably there was
a lot of Cobra worship or Naga Worship

in in the Buddhist time there was even
Naga Worship in in early Burma like
medieval

Burma and uh you know it's just like the
propagandists are are coming up with
these stories and saying you know look
you know our sages are more powerful
than your dragon so you might as well
just become a
Buddhist

but who knows maybe fire breathing Cobra
dragons will be discovered in the the
Valley of the Himalayas any day now so
I'll just move on to the next question
here this is from Indian guy also known
to some as

Trevor an Indian guy says what do you know now that makes you say that you wouldn't become a monk over again uh well it's just like if I knew then what I know now it wouldn't be necessary to to follow the same path that I followed last time you know sort of like if I knew then what I know now I wouldn't have to go to Junior High because I'd already learned that stuff I'm not saying that being a monk is like going to Junior High School

but um I mean if if I could find like an enlightened teacher who could just see right through me see right where I need help and then help me do that that's

fine but I did learn my limitations I
got as far as I could with it you know
on my own you know going alone like the
Horn of the
rhinoceros and uh so it's it was time to
try something else after 30 years of you
know being being the solitary Monk and
strictly practicing meditating a lot and
uh yeah it was just I got as much as I
could get out of it so I wouldn't want
to you know retrace the same route
anyway

but I've had U sort of Bad Karma when it
comes to teachers it's uh and partly
just it's like my own attitude having a
teacher is like

cheating you know it's just this feeling
I get it's uh you know it's having a
teacher it's sort of like they're doing
the work for you or
something but if I didn't know then what
I know now then of course I'd do it all
over again because it was not a mistake
definitely but if you've already learned
what you learned from it you don't need
to do it again I me that that was the
main point so we'll just move on to
Indian guys next question here who are
your favorite translators of the
Buddhist texts I particularly love the
DAP I have found there are many
translations my favorite translators is
the Buddhist texts well I mean I have to

admit that despite his

wacky in some to some extent non-

Buddhist leftist politics buku bodyi is

is about the most solid translator of

poly into English that's um translating

today

um but I mean he's he's not really a

meditator he's a scholar and so he knows

Orthodox Buddhist philosophy really well

but when Orthodox the Orthodox position

is not correct biku Bodi is probably

just going to defer to tradition unlike

somebody like ajan tanero

who I don't consider to be quite as good

of a translator but he understands the

spirit of dhama better than biku body

does because he's got some
accomplishment in meditation whereas
Buddha apparently does
not and with regard to lay translators
who aren't serious meditators they
haven't lived the life there's a lot of
stuff they're not going to
understand um with regard to the
DAP um my favorite translation is by
random chance I just happen to have it
right here this is the Buddhist
Publication Society uh edition of the
DAP or at least it was like 35 years ago
and it's by Acharya Buddha
Buddha translated by Acharya Buddha Buddha
with an intro by
Buddha and this is this is a good

translation I mean he he pretty much
defers to Orthodox tradition but he's
got uh some interesting endnotes that
are that are interesting as interesting
endnotes tend to

be so I guess I answered that
question so I guess I'll just move on to
the next question this is from nature
cure and nature cure says you talked
about no DT a lot or no view then what
would eight the the Eightfold Path like
sad

DT what what would be Eightfold paths
like sad DTI and the rest okay well in
the Noble eight-fold Path you've the
first step is Right View I mean that's

like step number one on the eight-fold path is Right View and that's not the same as no view which is at the end I mean no view is like very Advanced that's like the highest level whereas Right View it's essentially believing you know Buddhism is the way to go or the the noble um like the four noble truths you know the law of karma that sort of thing it's it's sort of like a road map for starting you out on your

journey and I mean if you start the journey with no map you're gonna probably going to go the wrong direction sooner or later so it's just a difference in uh like uh advancement you

start off with Right View which really ultimately isn't like ultimate Right View because all view ultimately is just view it's just like a symbolic perception that isn't reality a symbol is something that's supposed to stand for reality but isn't reality you know like T on a piece of paper is very different from an actual tree and it's the same way with the symbols in your mind they're very different from what they're trying to represent but eventually you're going to have to just leave all that behind just transcend go beyond all these symbolic interpretations of what you think is

reality but but that's very Advanced you
know that's you know for very Advanced
practitioners whereas step number one on
the nobil F path is just you know
getting the

basics a crude understanding of the
basics is good enough to get you going
in the right direction and right view is
going to evolve as you evolve
spiritually until finally you just leave
it behind it's like the the raft that
you leave behind after you've crossed
the flood

so I'll just move on to Nature Cure's
next

question which is inaya number two the
Sona paluta monks can touch and hit the

Sun and Moon what's your opinion on that
well yeah I I when I read that as a
junior monk I went to my teachers and
say what's the deal with this how are
you gonna touch and stroke the Sun and
Moon and they explain to me that
according to the commentaries all you're
doing is you're creating a kind of mind
created replica of the sun or moon and
and touching that but it could be
that it's just uh it was on some
standard weird list of psychic powers
that was circulating around ancient
India and it just wound up on the list
with the more normal psychic powers just
like reading minds and remembering your

past lives and levitating and walking on water and that sort of thing

so uh yeah I I think it it could have just wound up on this list through some sort of uh you know obscure cultural

reason but um yeah it's it's it's

problematic for us westerners that

somebody's gonna reach out using psychic

powers and stroke the sun I mean it

would be really hot you would

think um I mean maybe if you did it at

night then it'd be okay but I guess I'll

just move on to the next question here

and that is is it possible to become an

arant these days in your opinion well I

mean again arant are problematic I mean

it's difficult to say whether they even

exist in a saric context for example um
if nibana is completely off the scale
then what do you say of someone who has
attained n you know it's like it really
doesn't it's I mean it doesn't register
in this world but let's just assume for
the sake of argument that there are
aans then I don't see any reason why
there wouldn't be aans in this world
today like ramas used to say I keep
bringing up

ramas and in fact I keep bringing up
this same thing that ramas used to say
is like you know you can travel halfway
around the world and go to the Himalayas
and find some Guru who will teach you

the secrets of the universe well the whole time your aunt Mabel in Massachusetts was enlightened the whole time except instead of telling you the secrets of the universe she says have some soup but it just turns out that have some soup is the perfect thing to say under those circumstances so assuming that it is possible for anyone at any time to become an Aran you know in ancient times modern times whatever then I don't think that there's any reason why one couldn't become an Arham these days even though the culture is less spiritual than it was say in the Iron Age Ganges Valley but some people are just ripe you know

it's like you can't stop the ripeness of
their parmy their you know they're
they're ready and so I still think it
can happen and they don't even
necessarily have to be terrible out of
Buddhists in my opinion which is rank
heresy I'm sure to terot of Buddhist
dogmatists

so I'll just move on to the next
question which is from Quick quiz and I
sincerely hope it's recording this time
it says it's recording but I think it
said it was recording last time

too it's not even

funny so quick quiz says if a terraa lay
person had a glimpse of nibana let's

consider for sure and he has no savings
or interest to work for money and he
doesn't believe in monasteries how
should he continue to live this life
well I mean he does have the the option
of becoming like peace Pilgrim who was
this little old lady who just took off
walking on the road with no money and
just threw herself at the mercy of the
universe and I mean that's what really
spiritual people are supposed to do
that's what the early Christians were
supposed to do that's what the early
Buddhists were supposed to do just give
no thought for tomorrow what you will
eat or where you will sleep just take
off

walking that's that's one thing you
do I mean if you have no savings or
interest to work for money I mean still
I mean if you don't want to just take
off walking like peace Pilgrim or an
early Buddhist or Christian

Sage then uh maybe you could overcome
your lack of interest to work for money
just get some simple job that's enough
to hold your mind and body
together or I mean if you don't believe
in monasteries but still wouldn't be
totally opposed to living at one you
become a monastery attendant which is uh
be a fairly good spiritual way of of
living without having to follow all the

rules and then you just be driving monks around and cooking their meals for them and mowing the lawn and stuff and it'd be like a peaceful environment that wouldn't be too bad so I'll just move on to Quick quiz's next question here if he joins the monastery but doesn't really follow all the rules meditation methods or acting like he is accepting everything is he causing himself hardship well I mean if you become a monk and you don't follow the rules yeah you're you're causing yourself hardship because you're essentially being a dishonest monk U even if the other monks aren't following the rules either still that's

no excuse for being a LAX monk just
because other monks are
LAX but again I mean you could ordain as
a novice like a Coen as they're called
in Burma like a a big novice which you
only have to keep 10 precepts plus the
seia rules or again you could just be a
monastery ATT tenant and you pretty much
wouldn't have to follow any rules other
than maybe five or eight
precepts you still have to handle money
because you'd be handling the money for
the
monks but um partly I think it would
depend on how open-minded the the S is
at the the monastery at which you

weren't following the rules or acting like you were believing everything that they supposedly are supposed to believe I mean some some monasteries are open-minded and you know they're they know how weird eclectic lukewarm head oriented westerners are then other ones they might be just very dogmatic and say no I mean if you're not gonna if if you're not going to believe this stuff then you should just go away so it would depend to some degree on how open-minded the songa and especially the Abbot are at at different monasteries but again you have the options of becoming a an a novice an adult novice or just being a monastery

attendant or you can just hit the road so we'll just move on to Quick quiz's next question here or should he live a lay life and consider going to parti School write and translate books or something teach people meditation and sort of scholarly type of lay life and follow Venia as much as possible well if you're not a monk you don't have to follow vinia at all other than five or eight precepts which which are for Lay people um more spiritual probably than translating dhab books would be just like working in a s a soup kitchen just selfless service to others something like that or I mean if you

want to be a meditation teacher that's fine too but you should have a lot of experience in meditation preferably more than one kind of

it because a lot of people they just meditate a little bit maybe for a few years and they just try to set themselves up as as teachers and it's to some degree like the blind leading the blind in parti schools especially in Burma I can really can't speak for other countries but perotti schools in Burma are they're notorious they're like snake pits you know it's monks there who don't follow vinia don't really follow dhama they just want to get a degree and become uh a famous

teacher and uh yeah I've I've been at a few of these pariot schools in Burma and they're just

awful I mean if I had to live one as a monk I probably I wouldn't I wouldn't have stayed a monk nearly as long just just out of just disgust and

disillusionment at the behavior of the monks that that live at these places not all of them mind you like I spent over a year at mahag gandon in the city of amarapura

which is a big school Monastery in fact it was uh one of the most reputable School monasteries in Burma had a reputation for being very strict which

means that about 5% of the monks were seriously following trying to follow vineer rules you know maybe maybe even 10% I doubt that it was much more than 10% most of the monks still were were very LAX including most of the teachers but um even so I mean 10% or even 5% that's way better than the average school Monastery in Burma so I guess I'll just move on to the next question here this is from popcorn boxing and popcorn boxing says what did you think about AK water dying almost simultaneously with his wife anything mystical and I'd never heard that AK water died almost simultaneously with his wife um I don't know if you'd

call it mystical or not but certainly there'd be and Karma involved maybe they had very strong Karma with regard to each other and uh I don't know I don't know how they died you know I don't want to toss out any um hypotheses like maybe AK water was like a a goose or a stor or a love bird who you know when their mate dies they just lose all interest in living and just Pine away and die but I don't know Jimmy Stewart was apparently like that too after his wife died but I don't know how they died I don't know the details and I'd never really heard about it before so I would say that it's not

mystical but more

karmic so we'll just move on the next

question here this is from

ruie and God I really hope this is

recording I don't want to have to do

this a third time not that I'm

complaining about answering you guys'

questions though by the

way anyways ruy says hello poo I just

deleted a question casting minor

aspersions on Mr eart TOA I suppose

casting as experss is not karmically

sound anyway so here is a proper

question it is interesting how many

Mahayana still look down on terraa which

they consider selfish and perhaps not

emphasizing so-called loving kindness

enough however if that was the case we would not have any transmission of the terava tradition available to us at all the fact is that beus have been teaching for thousands of years even if they do not embrace the for the benefit of all sentient beings notion which is a rather problematic notion in itself any thoughts well I mean ultimately there are no sentient beings there is no self so no sentient beings so that's one thing that the mahays they just chain themselves by the leg to this I'm going to remain unenlightened until all beings are saved you know with their bodh of vow when the only way you can save all

beings is to save
yourself that's the only being you
really can save is yourself and again
it's sort of like um the house is on
fire you know it's it's a it's an old
Buddhist metaphor we're all in a burning
house and so I mean which is better for
you to do first aid on burn patients you
know burn victims that you're applying
first aid to the victims or you find a
way out of the house and then after you
find the way out of the house if you so
choose you can come back in and lead
people out but you can't lead people out
of the burning house until you know the
way out
yourself and you're not going to learn

the way out just from reading books you have to find the way out on your own so again it's like um the The Diamond Cutter Sutra and also St John of the Cross have the similar similar statements in that let's let's just go with the St John of the Cross version where he says you can have one person who's dedicated his life to selfless service of others you know he's feeding the hungry and tending to the sick and helping people with no homes to have a home you know have a a warm dry bed to sleep in you know they're just doing all this stuff to help others and then you got this other person who was sitting

alone in a Cell practicing High
contemplation which from the Buddhist
perspective would be at least second
genre so on the one hand you get this
one person doing all this worldly Merit
stuff helping others and then you got
this one other person who is like just
practicing jna St John of the Cross says
the person practicing Jonna is actually
helping the world more and I assume the
purpose the reason for that is the
person who's doing all the selfless
service I mean it's it's superficial
stuff it's at the it's at the surface
level whereas the person who is
practicing Janna is actually I mean he's
raising the level of consciousness of

the entire

world

something along those

lines

so really I mean by helping yourself you

help others by helping others you help

yourself we had to recite that every day

at the first Monastery that I lived at

in

ply so um yeah it's it's in there like

the Buddha himself taught out of

compassion but

um yeah I mean it's it is it is

emphasized even in ter

that you should have compassion for all

beings it's just that I mean ultimately

the all beings don't really exist and
again the only way you're going to help
them out of samsara is to find the way
out yourself there is *autā* in the *supata*
the *navasa* or the the the *suta* of the
boat which is saying I mean you can't
help others cross the flood if you're
just being washed Downstream
yourself so you got to find the way way
across so that you are able to cross it
yourself and then you can help others
across but uh Mahayana I guess teaches
that also it's just that you they're
teaching that you should all strive to
become a Buddha but I mean that's just
an anachronism because originally there
probably was no metaphysical difference

or wisdom difference between the founder
of the system and his enlightened
disciples because

at least according to Abid dama wisdom
is the same as amoha PA equals amoha so
PA is wisdom amoha is just absence of
delusion so if you got zero delusion any
Aran has zero delusion which means any
Aran has the same amount of wisdom as
any other Aran how how can you have
different zero

delusions it's just that the Buddha was
more of a intellectual genius or he had
certain talents you know in addition to
the zero

moha but uh I think I should just uh

move on to the next question I don't
know if I fully answer
that but I'll just uh move on next
question I guess the the question at the
end is just any thoughts so so I
answered it yeah there's
thoughts so I'll move on to next
question here this is from file goose
and file Goose
says file Goose says any further updates
on the navak cavada concept for non- lib
prog ideologue captured Buddhism in the
west
well I think like non lib prog ideologue
captured Buddhism in the west I mean
that would just be traditionalism I mean
you just go with what the text say you

don't go along with what the new like
the queer academic Buddhists are saying
like there's actually Western so-called
Buddhists in Academia writing that the
second Noble Truth should be
revised because the second Noble Truth
says all suffering is caused by desire
but obviously to the lib progue leftist
Buddhists not all suffering is caused by
desire because some is caused by
patriarchal
oppression so I mean that kind of
[_] I mean that's if you're going
to be
a navak cavada Buddhist you're going to
be like a a a good Buddhist like a

sincere authentic Buddhist then I mean
you accept the texts as authoritative at
least with regard to ethics you know you
might not have much use for the the
fairy tale stuff the fire breathing
Cobra dragons and all that but the
ethics is pretty
solid so let's see yeah there are no
further updates I mean it's how are you
going to have further updates on
traditionalism because that's
essentially what it is so I'll just move
on to fasile Gus's next question what
texts would navak cavada emphasize and
would you incorporate non- teravan ones
thinking of spicy ones like hakuin
yasutani and the Italian's doctrine of

Awakening uh well the main text that
navak kavat would emphasize would be the
poly texts I mean you could emphasize a
few other things like Le seatt is the
manuals of Buddhism some of the some of
the Talks by like aan cha or or mahasi
seato that kind of thing um would you
incorporate non- taden ones it depends
on the person some people are quite
content with just sticking with Orthodox
terraa somebody like me it's like my
mind isn't narrow enough to just fit
into this this category so I would read
other stuff also but I wouldn't confuse
the Orthodox terod stuff with you know
the the non- terod stuff you know you

got to keep clear which is
which but you can use the non-tod stuff
as a way of triangulating you know you
can find some other tradition
contemplative Christianity that in that
on their own they come up with the same
ideas with regard to advanced yogic
practice for example that lends a little
more Credence to Orthodox terraa when
you've got other systems around the
world where you know their most advanced
practitioners are having the same
insights then yeah that can be helpful
that can be useful and just looking at
the same issue of spirituality from
different angles can be
useful and with regard to the Italian's

doctrine of Awakening or Julius evola's
doctrine of Awakening it is it is a good
book I mean I think he takes
somewhat of a excessively fascist
approach to Buddhism I mean it's for the
most part it's right but when he's
comparing like an a Buddhist enlightened
being in arant with like Nichi and
Superman I think that's kind of pushing
it so yeah the main text that navak
cavada would emphasize would be the
traditional text because um it would
just be traditional Buddhism as
traditional as one can manage in the
west so which so you wouldn't NE
necessarily be fully ordained monks

because a fully ordained monk in the west is like a tropical plant that has to live in a kind of special protected Hot House environment with caretakers and so forth and if you want something to really take root naturally in the west it would have to be more in accordance with modern culture than with ancient Indian culture but um aside from that I mean you you'd still follow the same texts you might not follow vinea rules strictly because you're not going to be or fully ordained monks anyway but you just take whatever you can that is applicable to the west and don't totally ignore or reject what isn't applicable to the West because

there's still some validity and truth to it and for God's sake or for Nana's sake don't just start changing stuff I mean if you don't accept something you don't believe it I mean that's fine just leave it don't try to change what Buddhism teaches like second Noble Truth for example I mean that's just basic and they just the very fact that there are so-called Western Buddhists who want to modify the second Noble Truth just indicates that they just don't understand

dammo they really their main faith is in neomarxism and they add little Buddhist flavoring partly is a way of subverting

like traditional spiritual
systems so I'll just move on to uh f
file Goose's next question here which
are which is thoughts on Marshal virtue
in Buddhism in context of ringya Myanmar
Buddhists getting wise to islamists
Shenanigans um yeah I don't think that
the 969 movement in Burma really is a
marshall movement I don't I I haven't
seen it at all I mean there have been
some fighting
between like burmes Buddhists and like
Muslims but most of the fighting has
just been by lay people it's just like
been brawling more than anything
else so yeah I mean Marshal Buddhism
would be more like you know Bushido you

know like the the
samurai Marshal ethic of medieval Japan
even World War II Japan to some
degree um maybe like the Sri Lankan
Buddhists fighting for centuries and
centuries against the the toml in Sri
Lanka uh there's probably some some
Marshal virtue in that but um with
regard to uh Burma and the ringas and so
forth it's it's more verbal you know
it's just a little bit of uh criticizing
and protesting is mainly what it amounts
to so I mean sort of pressuring the
government to uh you know reduce or stop
immigration from Muslim countries that
sort of thing you know mainly they're

just stating in a nationalistic way that they want Burma to be for Buddhist they want Burma to be a traditionally Buddhist culture and any system for example Islam that that is like threatening or seeming to threaten the the pure Buddhism of Burma you know they're they're opposed to that and they don't want it to happen and they speak out against it but U that's about as far as it goes really aside from brawling so I'll just move on to FASA Gus's next and last question here in experience with PTSD veterans or tailor tailoring teachings to them and my experience with teaching people in the west is very limited in Burma I was

mostly a Hermit you know sometimes I wouldn't even come out to meet people I just stay hiding in my cave and then uh when I came to the West most people including most Buddhists in the west that I came across didn't really see me as a spiritual resource you know like some of the teachers would just see me as like a like a threat to their position or something as competition so I mean I really didn't get in into a lot of like I never conducted a Meditation Retreat in the west um but I have been told that there are dhamma teachers that specialize in

teaching PTSD veterans or just people
men that have like troubled
men that there are teachers who
specialize in that sort of thing it's
just they're teaching a kind of strong
Fearless masculine kind of dharma which
is a traditional kind of
dharma so it's out there but I'm not the
one who specializes in it but it's out
there and unfortunately I don't even
remember the names I I I know a friend
who knows one of these guys who
specializes in doing Retreats for guys
that have had you know traumatic
experiences and so forth so I'll just
move on to the next question which is
from

om and om says do Pacha Buddhas exist
today and if you go with the Orthodox
terraa they couldn't exist today because
they exist only at times when there is
no Buddhism in the world like Buddhism
dies out and then you've got you know
who knows how many

Millennia between you know the the
dispensation of one Buddha dying out and
then the next Buddha coming along and
red discovering dhama and you know
setting the the wheel of dhama In Motion
again that time in between is when Pacha
Buddhas exist and they're like hermit
Buddhas they're fully enlightened
they're omniscient in a way but they're

for some reason they don't or can't
teach they just choose they opt to just
mind their own business and stay out in
a cave in a in a Wilderness
somewhere and according to Legend godma
Buddha himself almost became a peka
Buddha because he figured nobody would
understand dependent Co rising and he
was pretty much correct on that
one so I'll just move on to OHS next
question what Christmas movie will you
watch or if this is after Christmas that
you have watched um I could recall
watching two pretty good Christmas
movies and then I think there was one or
two bad ones that just didn't register
you know there's there's any number of

just sort of lowbudget
and just not very good Christmas movies
out there and I think I've seen one or
two of those without it even like fully
registering in in Consciousness but um
the two Christmas movies just a couple
nights ago I watched How the Grinch
Stole Christmas the 2000 version not the
original animated 1960s version which
was good I like that movie and again I
think I mentioned this before that you
know there's no mention at all of the
manger or or Jesus or the three wise men
or anything it's just um The Grinch who
steals Christmas and of course we're all
secretly on the side of the Grinch you

know sort of like we're all secretly on
the side of King

Kong and I did watch uh a Christmas
story about the little kid who all he
wants for Christmas is this Daisy Red
Rider BB gun and that was that was a
good movie I like that I'd never seen it
before so um yeah those are the two good
Christmas movies that I saw

is uh How the Grinch Stole Christmas and
uh A Christmas Story oh also we watched
and now I remember we watched uh one of
the versions of A Christmas Carol you
know there's probably like 50 versions
of A Christmas Carol out there at least
and we wound up watching the George C
Scott version where he plays Ebenezer

Scrooge although I think my favorite version of A Christmas Carol is the Mr meoo

version so we'll just move on to the next question here also from um and he says have you been doing walking meditation at night in the dark in the forest or a cave in Burma so when he says have you been doing I assume he means did you do walking meditation at night in the dark in the forest or in a cave in Burma uh if I had a cave that was big enough to do walking meditation at night I would do walking meditation in the cave especially if there was a door that could close and keep out rats

bats and

snakes but the thing is if you do

walking meditation at night in the dark

in the forest in Burma it has to be like

a full moon night or you have to have

candles or or some kind of lanterns or

something because you have to be able to

see where you're going because there's

poisonous snakes that come out at night

and you don't want to step on a

poisonous snake you know you step on a

Russell's Viper and that's it you have

to stop doing your walking meditation

so yeah I did do a lot of walking

meditation at night in the dark in the

forest in Burma but it had to be enough

light where you could see where you're

you're

stepping so I'll just move on to 's next question which is how do they or do they at all celebrate December 25th in Burma well I'm pretty sure that December 25th in Burma isn't even a bank holiday I mean Burma is a Buddhist Country Christmas is ostensibly a Christian holiday and so I mean it's on the calendars it'll say Christmas on the calendars but I don't think that the the shops are closed or the schools are closed or anything and uh there are Christians in Burma I mean it's it's a relatively large minority especially in the cities like in

rangon and so before Christmas there'll
be Christmas carolers who go around and
they'll stand outside the gate and
they'll they'll sing Mar merry christas
to you to you all merry chras merry
chras to you to you all merry merry
christas to you all merry christas to
you all this over and over again and
it's mostly they sing it in English
because they get their Christianity from
like British mer missionaries I almost
said

mercenaries so you know they learn it in
like a missionary Christian school or
something and they learn English and
then they sing their Christmas carols in
English but that's about as far as it

goes there's no Christmas trees and big
Christmas uh like decorations in the
cities or anything like
that and there there were times in Burma
where I'd be looking at the calendar
trying to figure out what day it was and
I'd think oh yesterday was Christmas
what do you know about that although I
did that with my own birthday a few
times in Burma too but it's just not a
big deal in Burma so I'll just move on
to the next question here this is from M
mitraa Buddha
and mraa Buddha says who is more
enlightened godma Buddha of the terraa
tradition or shakyaamuni Buddha of the

Mahayana vajana tradition who would win
in a debate who is more
powerful well with regard to who is more
enlightened I mean assuming that they're
even two different people or two
different beings let's say terada has
the Buddha as a man he was a human being
he might have been 27 feet tall
according to the
commentaries but he was a human being
whereas the shakuni Buddha of the
Mahayana or vajana Traditions they've
pretty much turned him into a kind of
cosmic deity at least the S Boga Kaya
you know you got the three bodies of the
Buddha in like yoga Buddhism which is a
kind of Mahayana you've got the

nirmanakaya which is just the the human body you got the sambo Kaya which is like the personification of Buddha hood you know as a being up in some exalted Heaven realm and then you've got the dharmakaya which is just the Buddha nature the Buddha Essence the essence of of Consciousness this formless and infinite and pervades the entire universe sort of like the spirit of God or

something but when you get to the question of My trab Buddha here who is more enlightened then again it's like what I was saying earlier with you got zero delusion in the human gab Buddha of

Terra vadens you got zero delusion in
the cosmic Sakaya of the mahays and zero
delusion is zero delusion it's the same
so they're both fully
enlightened it's just that um The Cosmic
deity probably has some psychic powers
that the human being GMA Buddha didn't
have you know maybe he can
just his omniscience is faster or
something
so who would win in and debate I don't
think they would debate I mean there are
texts in which the Buddha warns against
debating it just leads to hard feelings
and so forth so I don't think they would
debate but again if both of them have
zero delusion they'd be equally matched

so I guess the debate would come out as
a tie and with regard to who is more
powerful I guess it would have to be the
cosmic

deity who uh you know he can just cause
worlds to Exist by the power of his mind
you know sort of the Buddha fields of
the the pure land Buddhists you know
they can just cause this this entire
world system to just manifest through
the power of their mind which apparently
the historical godma Buddha didn't do
because he just had to make do with
living in in India which existed long
before he was
born so I guess I answered that question

so I'll just move on to the next question this is from keep d vinia and keep the Venia says you said in one of your recent Q&A streams that you were more dedicated to the vinea and not to meditation but how can being a professional in vinea help you to become enlightened well either I misspoke or this is a misunderstanding of what I said because when I was a junior monk I was mainly interested in meditation but I didn't want to break the rules you know I nobody forced me to become a monk I was conscientious monk I didn't want to break the rules I wanted to follow vinia strictly and then it turns out that you've got to study vinia

intensively because there's so many rules and some of the rules are very like intricate and and like difficult to understand and so forth but my main interest was meditation when I became a monk and it remained my main emphasis throughout all virtually all of my monkhood all right up to the very end so it's just that you've got SAR PA you got morality wisdom no morality concentration and wisdom this is sort of like the the three-fold path of of Buddhism and as a junior monk especially my meditation was not so good my wisdom was not good enough to suit me but the seala part the

the morality part I could get that down
I could nail that at least outwardly
maybe not inwardly I'd still have like
dirty thoughts and so forth but
outwardly I could avoid breaking the
rules so that was maybe what I was
talking about uh which is what keep the
vinia is referring
to so I think I answered that question
I'm just gonna move on to the next one
by [__] is it true that the Buddha once
made racist remarks racist in quotemarks
about a dark skinned baby and I don't
recall the Buddha making remarks about a
dark-skinned baby except maybe there was
one of the two main kings in the
Buddhist time I can't remember if it was

pity kosa or bimis Sara but his favorite wife I think her name was Malika was considered ugly you know it was kind of a joke that the King's favorite wife is ugly because she was dark skinned I mean she she had a really good personality she was wise and gave him valuable advice and so forth which is why he loved her so much that you know she he considered to be pretty much his equal or you know as close as a woman could be to being equal back in those days in that culture um and then she had a baby and so the the King was visiting the Buddha when the messenger comes and says

the baby was born and he says it's it's
a girl and then the King was like
despondent because of course he wanted a
boy and then the Buddha says well she
could grow up and have a boy
which is I mean it was it was kind of a
lame consolation you know well you had a
daughter but at least you can be the
grandfather of a boy when she grows up
and has a boy but I don't remember
making a racist remark about a
dark-skinned baby if it happened you
know it's certainly not the Buddha
saying dark skinned babies or
darkskinned people in general are
inferior to light-skinned people it
would have been more along the lines of

him just acknowledging that the culture at his time favors light-skinned people the dark skinned people light skinn people it was it was you know was a a symbol of um being upper class really because you know it was the indigenous inhabitants were dark skinned and then you had the the lighter skinned Indo Arians invade and become the ruling class of Northern India so being lightskinned indicated you know high social status and that's why light skin was considered more attractive and it's it's still kind of that way in in Burma although in Burma it's just more if you've got light skin

it's more attractive because that means you're not out in the fields as a laborer getting burned black you know you can stay inside you've got like a cushy job which generally means that you're of higher Social Status you're work in an office or you're a school teacher or a shopkeeper or something which is higher St status than being a subsistence rice

farmer so I mean it would be something along the lines of that just sort of acknowledging that Society favors light-skinned people in ancient India but and Buddhism is very non-racist like you know anybody could join the S and once they join the songa

they leave behind all the ethnic luggage
the baggage you know all all the cast
stuff is is just left behind and they
just flow together like the rivers
flowing together into one
ocean so there really isn't any racism
in the polyx that I can think of it
could be something in there but other
than just in a way acknowledging that
that is the way the society was already
established and that you have to take
that into
consideration so I'll just uh move on to
keep deia's next question
which
is what is the essence of the Tibetan

Book of the Dead and who is its
author and I don't know if anybody
really knows who the author is of the
Tibetan Book of the Dead I'm sure
Tibetan tradition has somebody set up as
the traditional author but that doesn't
necessarily mean that they are the real
author you know like pretty much all
Mahayana sutras have the Buddha as their
author when really he probably
wasn't

so um yeah I don't know who the author
of the Tibetan Book of the Dead is but
the purpose of the Tibetan Book of the
Dead is to guide you uh in your first
experiences after you die and a lot of
the experiences are similar to The the

stereotypical experiences of people who have had near-death experiences you know first you you you rise up and you see your body lying down there below you know in the water or on the by the side of the road or on the operating table and then you go up higher and higher until you see this bright light and you go up into the bright light and you go through the bright light and then there are like Spirit guides on the other side in like a heaven realm and then you review your life and so forth it's just the stereotypical you know uh thing that H series of things that happen um after you die and the Tibetan Book of the Dead

is very similar to that way similar to
that you know it's got the bright light
and they advise you you know you know
it's the Book of the Dead is is like
recited to people who are on their
deathbed you know it's getting them
ready for death and you know it's saying
when you get into that bright light stay
in it as long as you can because it has
a purifying effect but eventually it's
like people they start feeling like
they're going to dissolve and they they
they panic and then they they get out
and then there's like a less bright
light sort of a a softer Golden Light
that you stay in that and then and then
you start meeting with these Spirit

beings and so forth and the Tibetan Book of the Dead is continually reminding you you me you're supposed to remind yourself these are all just mind made you know it's it's like my mind is creating all

this and so it's preparing them to wisely in a relatively enlightened way face what's going to happen after they die that's the purpose of

it so I guess I answered that question about as well as I'm able to I'm no

Authority on Tibetan Buddhism at all so I'll just move on to the next question which is from White Ash Piper and white ash Piper says and I should say before

before I say what white ash Piper says
this was the last question yesterday
although somebody asked another question
since then so this would have been the
last question of this

Q&A from White Ash Piper who says a
silly question I suppose but it's
burning inside me like an attached hot
CLE and I assume he means a hot coal but
he he typoed it and it's it's
cosl like an attached hot CLE why do all
the statues of the Buddha have him with
hair and yet his Buddhist monks are
shaved and yeah that's true I I used to
bring this up to to Burmese Buddhists
who really don't question their
tradition you know they don't think

about

it um it's like the Buddha was a monk he would have had a shaved head too why does he always have hair and the only explanation for this that I have come across that comes anywhere near to making sense is that the first people to make Buddha statues were Greeks because Alexander the Great conquered Northwestern India which is now mostly Pakistan and he started colonies of Greeks in Northwestern India and those Greeks eventually converted to Buddhism and so the Greeks liked their statues and so they started making Buddha statues which didn't exist before they

started doing it in Ancient India like the earliest um Buddhist shrines and so forth it would just have like an empty seat or a footprint or a B leaf or something to symbolize that the Buddha was no longer in this world but the Greeks didn't think that way and so they started making Buddha statues and they modeled their Buddhas on the god Apollo whether there was any kind of connection between like the Buddha was identified as like an avatar of Apollo or something I don't know but they modeled the Buddha on the god Apollo and at that time in that part of the world the god Apollo was like stylistically represented with

an aristocratic hairdo with a kind of a top knot on the top and so they made their Buddhas with the aristocratic hairdo and the top knot and the top knot remain

long after people knew what it was supposed to be like in in like Thailand sometimes you'll have like a flame on the top of the head and there was one Buddha statue at a monastery that I was staying at it looked like an onion like a big onion on the top of his head and a lot of or probably most Buddhist statues they just have like this knob there but that probably evolved from the top knot of the Apollo like Greek Buddha

images and um

it's it just seems silly because

everybody ought to know that the Buddha

didn't have hair that he shaved his head

because he was a monk but then what do

you do with that knob that supposed to

be

there I mean you don't want to have like

this weird just lump like built into his

skull so yeah it's it's just irrational

it's just human nature you just blindly

follow along with your tradition no

matter how atic or silly it might be and

I'm not saying that Buddhism is like

silly overall but I mean there are a lot

of spiritual Traditions or religious

Traditions that are more than half

silliness and and just look at what has replaced religion for many people in the west which is politics and I mean it's just rampant silliness or worse than silliness so we got one last question that got in under the wire after my first aborted attempt at doing this Q&A and again I sincerely hope this one is recording and this is from Austin and Austin says poo I've been struggling with anger it's different from sadness I can't just tune it out when anger takes over I feel fully consumed and even when I recognize it snapping out of it seems impossible any advice on what I can do thanks well the only advice I can really

give with regard to

anger is from my own experience I'm not a particularly angry person but it does happen sometimes and especially when you're a monk and you're trying to practice very strictly it's like this pressure cooker you know it's like your natural urges are restrained and it just builds up this pressure and so you can explode more easily in some respects and there were cases when I would just erupt as a monk there was this one time when I was staying think this place called the bate o the baate doya and I was living under this Tree on A Flat Rock up above the montering and that forest was just getting raped to death by Village wood

cutters you know the big trees they cut
down for for Timber the small trees
they' cut down for firewood and the
saplings and stuff they just the cows
would eat it so the whole forest was
just getting just
devastated and of course I was a tree
hugging nature lover you know I still am
to some degree and I mean I was just
like grumbling you know and anyways
there were times when I'd just drive out
wood cutters from around my tree you
know I come back from alms round and
there's like people chopping trees so
one day I come back from alms round and
before I even make it back to my my big

Flat Rock I hear chopping wood coming right up from where I was staying so you know I start getting angry right then and there and like start walking up and there's already like poles from Chopped small trees there like blocking my path from this guy who'd been chopping trees and I get up there and I just start first you know I'm just raising my voice because he's some distance away and I just telling him don't chop wood here and he says I'm chopping drywood which wasn't entirely true because there were green sapling poles laying on the ground so I yelled at him again don't chop wood here and again it's I'm chopping drywood and then like the third or

fourth time I kind of just blew my blew
my stack and I started Belling at
bellowing at him just don't chop wood
here and my arm just starts going like
this and at the same time that I'm like
bellowing at this guy there's another
part of my mind just that's like wow I
didn't intend to have my arm waving like
this you know it's like there's this
other part of me that's just observing
this in in kind of mild interest
thinking you know that was just purely
automatic just having my arm like waving
my finger at him you know and it uh I
think it was maybe even the last Q&A
where there was another time where it

was just blazing hot weather it's just
you cannot be comfortable at all ever
except maybe when you're taking a bath
it's just the sweat doesn't stop and
it's just blazing hot and it won't rain
in central Burma it's like semi desert
it was just miserable and finally I mean
you just start to crack sometimes and at
one point I just threw this conion you
know I'm just yelling and cussing and
slamming things fortunately I was alone
in my cave so I wasn't making a fool of
myself in front of others but you know
I'm just yelling and just throwing this
contion and it was like this
dissociation happened where one part of
me is just throwing the canyan and the

other part of me is just watching you
just

observing and I mean that happens I mean
it can happen to just about anybody like
my father was a hardcore alcoholic for
many

years and being a a macho tough guy he
just decided to just cold turkey and
quit drinking and so he's all by himself
in the house and he's got two Escape
Routes on the table in front of him he's
got a bottle of booze and a loaded
pistol just in case it gets too bad and
he's just going through the DTs he's
just raging and tearing at his hair and
just I mean pissing his pants just just

going nuts and then he starts
hallucinating this big eye on the wall
just just staring at him and he knew
deep down that was like him observing
himself and it was sort of like a a
somewhat cruder version of my experience
throwing the kyion in the cave where you
know you got there's like two levels of
you there's the level that's just
throwing the conion just you know losing
losing your [__] and then there's this
other part that's it's always there I
mean when you have an experience like
this you know it's always there there's
always this Observer that's just
silently observing everything and not
getting

involved and so by being mindful just practicing mindfulness as much as you can you're you're increasing the likelihood of this Detachment occurring when you need it to occur because you can't just wait until you're pissed off and then try to do something about it because you know you're already kind of off the tracks at that point but if you practice mindfulness and just observing your mental States observing your emotions from a kind of detached perspective you know when you're observing something you've already created a kind of Detachment because you know if you're anything at all you're

the one who's observing and not the thing being observed so if You observe anger for example already you've got this distance between yourself and the anger the anger isn't you anymore you're just watching anger you know anger is arising but again you can't wait until you're angry to try to practice this you have to get into the habit of just mindfully observing your emotions your mental States you know when you're calm so that when the [_] does hit the fan you've got this habit base that you can rely on that it'll just kick in and in some ways for me like I'm not normally a very angry person in some ways it's easier to be mindful of anger because

all of a sudden it's like sirens and
flashing red lights going on which is
very

noticeable so in a way it just kind of
makes it this unusual thing that you
want to just

observe but I don't know how uh Angry of
a person Austin is you know if you get
angry a lot it might just be a habitual
thing that you know you're used to it
and so it's not so unusual that it
instantly like grabs your

attention but the best advice I can give
is just get into the habit of observing
your mental States and your
emotions mindfully with this kind of

philosophical or spiritual Detachment so
that when you know something really bad
happens or you know something really
volatile

happens then just the habits that you've
been developing will make it easier for
you to step back and observe it I mean
you won't necessarily stop being angry
it's like when I was throwing the
conception I I just threw the contention it
was just this other aspect of my mind
this deeper aspect was just observing
and not getting involved and that
weakens it

because um so long as you're not
identifying with it you're not you know
making more momentum you're not

strengthening The Habit it's just the
Habit is running itself out without
being

reinforced but that's about the best
thing I can do or just avoid situations
that that uh cause anger

although I mean that's a makeshift and
you can't completely avoid situations
like you got to drive in traffic and
there's people driving like idiots then
you you're pretty much just you have to
deal with

that but uh I guess I answered that
question and now I'm done answering
questions I hope until next week I
really hope that this recorded this

time and uh smash the like button you
know you know the you know the drill
smash the like button and uh subscribe
if you haven't already and check out the
URL links below which includes the links
to Amazon and the books that I have for
sale that I that I wrote and be
happy

hello and welcome to episode 74 of
question and answer I am your host poo
basa and I'm going to be nervously
looking at this thing to make sure it's
really recording because last time I had
to do it twice because the first time it
didn't record for mysterious reasons and
anyway we've got uh a moderate amount of
questions to ask just covering pretty
much the full spectrum of questions to
ask and so I might as well just Wade
right into it and the first question is
from Austin and Austin says in some
sense I feel disillusioned to society
and it grows ever present more and more
every day like I'm trapped inside a

vessel watching my life go by almost
like a child strapped in the back seat
of a car watching the road past with no
further destination in mind is this good
what should I do

I feel like this would be a good quality
to have if I was a

monk well disillusionment is uh

essentially niida in uh poly and it's

like the first step towards

Enlightenment you know there's like a

three steps there's niida which means

like disillusionment or just being fed

up second is waga which is dispassion

and third is wiuka which is

Liberation so I mean yeah as for from a

spiritual point of view it's probably

it's probably good to be disillusioned
with Society to be fed up with the world
or just lose interest in the world not
want to part participate much
anymore although it's kind of
interesting what he says when he
describes the state like I'm trapped
inside a vessel watching my life go by
almost like a child strapped in the
backseat of a car watching the road pass
with no further destination in mind um I
reminds me of mental states that I've
had a lot both as a monk and as a lay
person even as a kid where it's just
you're just watching the world like on a
movie screen you know it's almost like

you're just completely detached from it
you're just watching it on a
screen and it's it's like some kind of
virtual reality that you can't fully buy
into and so yeah from a spiritual point
of view that's good from a worldly point
of view it's probably counterproductive
because they want you to be like gung-ho
working for the team and all
that so what should you do I mean it
does indicate that if you're just
getting fed up with this world or
disillusioned with this world it may be
time to you know step up the game you
know move on to something next you know
it's like what you're doing now isn't
really I mean I almost said it isn't

really satisfying you but I me nothing
that you can possibly do will really
satisfy you because that that's the
first Noble Truth

Buddhism but uh yeah try something
different try

something uh maybe just a little more
Consciousness raising or

something I won't won't encourage you to
try psychedelics probably already have
anyway let's see what else what other
advice I mean there's really not much
advice that I can give other than just
uh you know be mindful of it be aware of
the situation to try to understand the
situation as well as you can be as

conscious as you can in any situation
that you find yourself in and that's
about the best you can
do so I think I'll just move on to the
next question here this is from Fred and
Fred says is the purpose of Buddhism to
wipe the Slate of cognition clean and I
mean that's not really the ostensive
purpose of Buddhism the ostensive
purpose of Buddhism is to free fre
yourself from dooka or suffering or to
free yourself from
delusion but wiping the Slate clean of
let's see wiping the Slate of cognition
clean yeah there's there's various ways
of interpreting that I suppose when
you're in a Janna State that's what

you'd be doing

temporarily um but if you're becoming

enlightened the Slate of cognition

probably won't be wiped clean so much as

it'll just be sort of neutralized it

just won't have the same effect that it

used to have because you're not

identifying with it

anymore so I think I'll just move on to

Fred's next question

here which is as

follows I think a lot of people like

hippies think Buddhism leads to a

blissful state would they be misguided

in this respect so are there still

hippies in the world I mean they'd

probably be really old hippies I don't think I mean you can't really be a young hippie can you I mean there's hip stirs which are very

different huh I mean there's like flower children still still walking around with like bell bottoms and flowers

embroidered on their on their jeans and bare feet and love

beads yeah theyd probably be like in their 70s or 80s at this

point but uh let's just get to the

question here I think a lot of people

like hippies think Buddhism leads to a blissful state St would they be

misguided in this respect well I mean

again if you're in a state of jna that

could be a state of bliss um I mean like
the Hindus especially consider like
Brahman the attainment of Brahman to be
like sat Chanda which is like true Bliss
of

mind um but Buddhism really doesn't
describe it as Bliss I think you can
find it in the

texts um but it's Main main more of a
negative description in early Buddhism
where it's just the cessation of

suffering and if you want to call the
cessation of suffering or unease Bliss
you know you got no unease that would be
you know presumably a blissful State you
know it'd be an equanimous State a

contented

state so yeah I guess you could call it
Blissful although you know Bliss as like
a positive pleasure yeah it wouldn't
lead to that I mean it can lead to that
but that's not the that's not the the
ultimate

goal the ultimate goal is just to
completely

transcend positive and negative

States so I think I answered that one so

I'll just move on to Fred's thirdd

question here Fred's on a roll he's he's
asking them

questions and his third question is I

have given up on the monk route it's

beyond me I went through a real Downer

accepting that this the Mind played many tricks recently so how can one cope with a negative mind narrative that thinks it's in the driver's seat well be mindful of it and detach from the negative mind narrative I mean that's the best you can do and it takes practice you have to just keep practicing it's like like playing the piano or something you don't just sit down and start doing it it takes a lot of practice and mindfulness also takes a lot of practice unless you're just some kind of

oy that there just has an innate talent to be mindful but that's relatively rare

maybe in India or something you'll find people like that at least in higher numbers than you'll find them in uh in the United States for example

so how can one cope with a negative mind narrative I mean mindfulness is the Panacea it's the Cur all it it's good for whatever ails you and uh any any kind of negative mental States you just observe it you know negative mental state is

arising but again it takes practice but when you observe a mental state you mindfully note it you create this

Detachment it's no longer you anymore

it's you if you're anybody at all is the

one who's observing it so there's
already this Detachment it's not you
anymore and you weaken it you don't
completely abolish it but you're like
taking the wind out of its sails so to
speak you're making it so that when it
happens again through force of habit and
again through force of habit that it'll
be weaker and weaker because you're not
reinforcing it sort of like the the
Stray Dog that keeps showing up in
Thailand and if you feed it even just a
little bit every once in a while it'll
just keep coming back but if you just
don't feed it it'll eventually just give
up and go

away and defilements are like stray dogs
so I'll just move on to the next
question and this this is from
PSA and PSA says how does a serious
Buddhist protect oneself from bullying
it appears that when a person is
seriously following the precepts and
following right speech it is almost
impossible to fight back and one's only
weapon is to walk away from difficult
and abusive situations but walking away
is not always an option especially for
people living in a house with other
people or for people with a job and
similar situations what do you recommend
how can a Buddhist fight back without
destroying the practice or is it just

impossible and one must simply endure the abuse while maintaining perfect morality it might sound like I'm asking many questions but it's only one question how does a serious Buddhist protect oneself from bullying well there are various ways of going about it I mean one is just do as much good as you can so that you have good karma so that bad things are less likely to happen to you but still bad things will happen to you sometimes so I mean it's PSA here does differentiate between bullies that you can avoid and Bullies that you can't avoid or that are very difficult to avoid and I think that

the the approach you would take would vary like let's say it's let's just discuss bullies you can avoid just for starters let's say you just happen to be you walk into the wrong kind of bar but if you're a good Buddhist you won't go into that situation anyway but you walk into the wrong kind of a bar and this biker dude just takes an instant dislike to you and starts pitching [_] at you well what you do is you do not like see how do I put it I mean you don't put anything into the interaction you don't feed any kind of negativity into it that you just try to be good-natured answer his questions or whatever you know he's like

picking fun at you but you know you just don't take the bait it reminds me of this movie that uh George Clooney was in it like The Men Who Stare at Goats and it it's based on a true story that the Army was experimenting with with people that that were using like mind powers to deact deactivate violence and it it it works the way the way they were doing it is just um you know you just don't add anything to the interaction it can just Peter out because the person's not getting the feedback that they're they're looking for but I mean it doesn't necessarily always work but it has worked fairly

well for me in the past but again you've got the situation where you it's like a domestic situation at home or your boss is an [__] or something what do you do in a situation like that well I mean for starters you just continue trying to to be a good person you know not feeding anything into it if you if you can avoid it and also I mean the the traditional approach the Buddhist approach to a situation like this if you're dealing with like a

chronic um I wouldn't say enemy it could be an enemy or it could just be like a person who's just hard to get along with is sin meta so you just make a part of your meditation practice just beaming

love at that person and it actually does work if if you're good at it you might not even have to be extremely good at it and like if some person is just so horrible that it's it's really difficult to beam love at them there was a monk in Burma I can't remember his name now but uh he he invented I I assume he invented maybe somebody else taught it to him it's called the pebble method of sending meta to somebody that's really hard to send meta to where you just find this round smooth little Pebble and you name it the same name as this person that's causing trouble for you and every day you make this little ritual of you put

it into a little glass of of cold water
cold clean water and then you say just
as this pebble is surrounded by cool
Clear Water May so and so be surrounded
by peace because I mean a lot of people
find it really difficult to send love to
somebody who's making a hard giving them
a hard time but the fact is anyone who
is deliberately making trouble for other
people is an unhappy person happy people
tend not to [__] with other people they
don't mess with with other people you
know it's Live and Let Live if a person
is happy it's when they're unhappy that
they want to mess with people you know
it's like
like tiberious Caesar just sometimes he

enjoyed watching people get tortured I mean there's other like apparently ma chairman ma was like this too or or other people let's see who else not that it matters I guess valentinian the great of the late Roman Empire was also like this where they get entertainment from watching people get tortured and they had to be deep down miserable messed up people in order to get pleasure from seeing somebody who is more miserable than they are I mean that's really what it boils down to is they're miserable and so I mean even though they might be smiling on the surface deep down they're messed up

they're unhappy and so at least they can look at someone who's more unhappy than they are and consider themselves to be relatively happy even though they're not really all that happy so the point I'm getting to is it's unhappy people that want to mess with other people and so if you can help to make them happier even just like secretly beaming love at them without saying anything about it or just you know do something go out of your way to do something nice I mean if they're really an [__] they'll just complain about how you didn't do it right or something but still I mean that's about the best you can do unless if the situation is just intolerable you know

you're just completely being harassed at work by your boss that might be time to find another job or if the the home situation is horrible unless you're like a little kid then I mean if it's really really bad you know it's like a living hell then I mean you can just use the door

so then ultimately with regard to fighting back I mean even an ordained monk is allowed to strike out in self-defense if someone is like physically assaulting you then you can do essentially whatever is necessary to eliminate the threat although you shouldn't be trying

to kill

somebody but if you're just trying to

save your own skin

then uh yeah pretty much anything goes

in a situation like that but although

that's like desperate Last Resort and if

a person is really saintly they'd

probably just rather get killed than

kill somebody

else so I think move on next question

here this is from covac and CAD Zeda and

if I didn't answer the bullying question

well enough I do apologize um I mean I

have been in situations like that when I

was a

kid U I'm kind of a big guy and uh

nobody's really tends to mess with me

much anymore but uh yeah I mean it is it is a sensitive subject it's not a good situation to be in if you're just like um like a victim I don't like the word victim it's it's totally overused but um yeah I mean there are things you can do that don't necessitate being just flagrantly

immoral so again I'll just move on to next question here and this is from covac in sead zida and he says what makes a good meditation session how do I know if I had one I can understand obvious things like being able to be undistracted for long periods and such but other than that it's pretty vague

yeah well I mean this the whole idea of a good meditation session is pretty vague isn't it but um yeah I mean a good meditation session would be one in where you're actually meditating so long as you're actually meditating it's a good meditation session but if you're sitting there and then like you realize all of a sudden you realize that for the past 20 minutes You' just been thinking about food or titties or something then yeah that's that's not good you're not meditating you're mind is just wandering around so so long as you're actually meditating you know you're noting whatever comes up if you're doing the mahasi method for example and

nothing in particular is coming up
you're just watching the breast going in
and out or watching the abdomen you know
expanding and
Contracting then
uh you're you're actually meditating I
mean if you get py you know if you're
just like really enthusiastically
meditating and doing it well then that's
even better but uh I mean any meditation
session where you're actually meditating
pretty much all the time then I would
consider that a good meditation session
me you don't have to be uh getting into
jna or anything to have a good
meditation

session so I think I'll just move on to
covac and CAD Z now's next question here
tip on increasing ability to sit in
meditation longer without bodily pain
pain without having to shift positions
well that's two different things being
without bodily pain and being without
having to shift positions because like
the mahasi method back in the old days
they used to say you no matter how bad
it hurts even if you think you're going
to die you should not shift positions
that pain is the friend of the meditator
pain is the key that unlocks the door to
niana that's what the mahasi method used
to say
up until like spoiled pampered

westerners started flooding in and like complaining about how they didn't have cushions and stuff but um I'm not exactly sure how covac and CAD Z not sits I used to always sit in the full Lotus position which is relatively painful after a while I have to admit but my legs are not very flexible and I did come across articles like in yoga magazines and I'm sure you can find this on the internet um like tips on how to sit in the full Lotus or whatever position you're sitting in um you know more easily to increase your flexibility so the full Lotus is easier and I mean if you can

sit in the full Lotus I would definitely recommend it and uh I mean it keeps your ankles off the floor for example I mean if you're sitting in the easy position also called the Burmese position with your feet kind of like one in front of the other not actually cross but just kind of both on the floor then I your ankles can rub up against the hard floor which causes uh pain that way but um I mean if you're sitting in the full Lotus and your feet and your ankles are resting on top of the alternate thigh and uh I mean still you're going to have sore ankles just from the the pressure you know the twisting and the

sore knees and maybe sore hips but with increased I mean just bear with it and with practice it doesn't hurt so much and if you do the stretches and OAS or whatever that the yoga people say that probably will make it easier so I guess that would be it but don't totally wimp out and start sitting in a chair that's that's just that's not cool unless I mean your legs are so crippled up you just cannot sit crossleg it but the closer you can get to the full Lotus it's just going to automatically boost your meditation by at least 3% just being in the full Lotus I I'm not exactly sure why I'm sure the

yoga people would have you know some explanation regarding you know the the the the spine you know the Kundalini or the spinal cord is straight or whatever is more straight but it seems to me that if you sit in the full Lotus it's you're you're more likely to sit up straight you know it's conducive to a good posture and also it may be that when your legs are like folded up like a pretzel like that it reduces blood flow to your legs which would then like increase blood flow to your head and like maybe more oxygen would make you more conscious or something but yeah that would be my main advice um with no formal oh wait that's

not it that would be my advice like on
being able to sit in
meditation uh without bodily pain would
be to you know find some yoga article or
yoga video telling what stretches to do
so that you can sit in meditative
posture more easily and um I mean
without bodily pain I
mean I don't know I've I've sat through
a hell of a lot of bodily pain I mean
sometimes I was sitting like when uh I
was listening to a speech by upand once
mahasi
upand and I was sitting there probably
in the full
Lotus up front where everyone could see

me and I mean he was just talking and talking and talking until finally it's like my my legs are just in screaming pain I'm just like shaky and and sweaty because just of the the agony I was going through and I was no longer really even listening to what he was saying I'm just hoping that he'll just get done you know just like begging him if you can read minds please just hurry up and end this

discussion so let's see it's kind of a digression isn't it I don't even know what got me off on that let's see oh yeah the bodily Pain part I mean bodily pain is not necessarily something to be avoided I mean if you can learn

like with through practice how to

observe pain

mindfully uh you can even make it a

meditation object like when I was at

ponama I was getting pain a lot just

from all the sitting that had to be done

and it was you just sit down and maybe

do the abdomen for a little bit until

the pain starts and then you can just

sit there and and meditate on pain note

the pain because it's really an obvious

meditation object I mean it's just just

glaringly obvious so it's it's in a way

it's kind of hard to drift your mind

away from the pain other than just maybe

drifting into like these desires for the

pain to stop or maybe I should get up or
change positions or
something so yeah try the try the yoga
stretches so I'll just move on to see AC
and read Z's third question which is I
noticed when I meditate throughout the
day with mantras and no formal sitting
not concentrating that much my head
feels a slight pressure after a while is
this a sign I should stop what does it
say and I really am not in a position to
speak with authority on this subject it
could be that just doing the mantras if
you're voicing it like from for hours
and hours it could cause a certain
amount of head pressure you know like
like blood pressure just because of what

you're doing with your throat and and mouth and so forth but um the only the only thing I've ever read about having head pressure while meditating was in an old ROM dos book and he was talking about how when he was in India he was getting uh like this weird head pressure when he was meditating and he went to his teacher about it and his teacher said it's because of all the acid you took that it's caused a kind of weird energy blockage in your mind or in your brain or something so I mean it's just something that you I mean it doesn't necessarily mean that you should stop even even pain doesn't mean that you

should necessarily

stop unless it's like seriously messing

up your leg or

something your sciatic nerve or

something so let's see here

see I noticed when I meditate throughout

the day with mantras and no formal

sitting not concentrating that much my

head feels a slight pressure after a

while is this a sign I should stop I

don't think it's a sign that you should

stop what does it say I'm not exactly

sure what it says but I'm pretty sure

it's not saying that you should

stop so I think I'll just move on the

next question here sorry I I'm No

Authority on head pressure and

meditation got to admit so the next question is from

Toronto and Toronto says with such a small presence that's largely confined to the virtual realm does ult Buddhism really stand a chance if so what does the future of ult Buddhism look

like so does Al Buddhism really stand a chance I mean so long as you've got one person who's essentially an ALT Buddhist and I'm not exactly sure what Toronto Nat is referring to with regard to all Buddhism I mean i' I've WR an essay about alt Buddhism that's on my blog um that was back when alt right was kind of a kind of a thing the altri is rarely

gets mentioned anymore and always almost always in derogatory terms which generally means that you know the the mainstream propagandist attack on the alt-right by you know equating them with Nazis and so forth um essentially worked but um getting back to the question here does all Buddhism really stand a chance I mean if one person is practicing something you know successfully you know they're getting making progress you know they're getting benefits from doing it then still it's it's okay but I I assume he's talking about um social movement or at least a movement within Buddhism that uh you know is sort of

conservative

traditionalist uh but nevertheless still

like Western in its

attitude um

yeah I

mean let's see he's got another question

here that's kind of a continuation of

this maybe I should have combined it all

into one into one but what does the

future of all Buddhism look like um it's

it's hard to say exactly if you've got

some charismatic leader who really

causes the thing to take off but um at

present you know for the foreseeable

future it's just going to continue

pretty much the way it is which is

mostly online because there's just not
enough enough of
us that I mean not all of us not enough
of us in like concentrated into one area
that really having temples and and like
meditation halls and so forth in in like
you know brick and mortar buildings it
it just doesn't seem very realistic
unless maybe you got like a western
Monastery with a western monk who might
just be specifically invited to just
come and live at this Monastery you know
you got a few people that you know have
similar views they live close enough
together they got enough money that they
can set up you know some kind of little
cabin maybe a little damaal and invite a

western monk to come and stay there that they consider to be strict in his practice and has some wisdom can teach meditation then yeah that would that would be fine and I've heard a lot of people talking about it but it doesn't happen very often but because largely because they're just not enough people with the same point of view concentrated in one area you know you got like two or three in this city and two or three in that City and one in this small town in this other place and it pretty much has to be online where at least people can communicate with each other and share their ideas and kind of find uh some

kind of sense of of of a tribe I don't
want to use song of because a
traditionalist would consider only
ordained monks and nuns to be
S

so does all Buddhism really stand a
chance sure so long as anybody's
practicing it but I mean but stand
Standing a chance in the sense of just
taking off and going mainstream or
something um yeah that would be a that
would be a long shot I

think so I'll just move on to the second
part of the same question I'm pretty
sure how do we go about building o
Buddhist communities locally surely we
need to have our own monasteries temples

schools and institutions and such well
yeah I pretty much already answered that
question I think a good starting point
is you've got a relatively simple AER
cabin and then maybe a larger venue that
I mean in a warm climate it could just
be like a roof on posts with some
flooring that that there could be domat
talks and meditation there there and
then just invite a monk that you have
respect for you consider to be a good
and venerable monk to come and stay
there and just sort of be the nucleus of
this group and if he's a good teacher
and he's got Charisma and so forth then
probably it'll attract more and more

people and you just do this in various
various areas wherever you have enough
people with enough money that they can
in enough time to support the monk
because the monk is going to need
support he's going to have to have
people bringing him food every day or
maybe a monastery attendant staying
there who's going to be cooking his food
every
day but a monk just can't wander around
going for alms in most places in the
west and live on
that so yeah I guess I guess that's how
you do it that that would make the most
sense um because going the other route
with sort of navak cavada where you've

got sort of a quasi ordained sa that
isn't really ordained you know they're
wearing gray sweats and they've modified
things a bit so that you know the
ancient Indian stuff with regard to
rules of etiquette and protocol and so
forth can be set aside and you know it's
it's more in in harmony with
Western you know Western culture Western
Society um that's I think that would be
more difficult I think the easiest way
to get started would be as I already
mentioned you just find you know a
conservative traditionalist monk with
wisdom who follows the rules and you set
up a little place for him to live it

doesn't have to be luxurious or fancy or beautiful and so long as he's willing to come and stay there you know he he becomes like the center of this little old Buddhist

community so I guess that would be the the most realistic way of doing it but I mean

ultimately um probably if if you had enough monks or you had one monk like this who

was uh influential enough then he could be the Catalyst for starting this quasi monasticism where You' got people wearing like gray sweats and you know they don't completely avoid handling money because I mean in the west that's

not easy to do not nearly as easy as in
Ancient India so you know you just
handle only what is necessary to handle
that kind of a thing eat one meal a day
even though maybe you take what little
money you've got and buy something for
yourself I don't know it would depend on
you know the vision of the people who
are setting up this uh quasi sa of semi
renunciant um who would have who would
have the blessing of the terad and Thea
and they wouldn't be calling themselves
beus you know they wouldn't make any
pretense of being fully ordained and
really I mean it's not even necessary to
be fully ordained

um unless you're like an orthodox
dogmatist who thinks that unless you're
fully ordained you cannot be enlightened
for more than 24 hours about
dying

so I guess that's how that would be a
realistic way of going about it so I'm
going to uh move on to the next question

here this is from Arin and Arin says
would you consider Buddhism to be an
atheistic religion and I mean it depends
on your definition of

atheistic um atheistic would I mean
literally means believing that there is
no God or some people would say some
people would include agnostics into
atheist atheism and then just say you

know somebody who at least doesn't assert that there is a God or someone who just ignores God but um I'm just going to go with the literal meaning of atheism is just there is no God and uh with regard to small G Gods yeah Buddhism accepts the existence of small God Gods who are simply beings that are higher up than we are you know they live longer they have more psychic powers you know they're higher up on the scale than than us humans but um with regard to a an ultimate absolute God Buddhism does not define the absolute as God you know it's Nirvana nibana or nibana datu which

would be like nibana or Nirvana as a metaphysical State rather than just an ethical attainment like a psychological State

practically so yeah Buddhism especially
terab Buddhism has been used as an example of an atheistic religion where some people will Define religion as you know a belief in God and you know like the worship of that God which does apply through most religions I guess especially in the west but uh yeah terraa Buddhism also some some system like jism um they are essentially religions but they don't they're not centered on worshiping a God Like Buddhism

acknowledges the existence of gods but
it doesn't encourage worshipping them
because they got their own lives to lead
that's not that's not what spiritual
spirituality is all about especially in
Buddhism

so I guess I would consider Buddhism to
be an atheistic religion even though it
does accept the conventional existence
of small G Gods but even the small God
gods are not ultimately
real but I mean it's just a small step
from the Buddhist concept of Nirvana to
like the upanishadic concept of
Brahman and from the the Hindu point of
view Rahman is God so it's it's largely

a matter of definitions and like
semantics vocabulary whether you're
going to call Nan God or
not but in Buddhism Nirvana is not
considered to be God Mahayana Buddhists
some of them have essentially deified
the Buddha so that he's like this Cosmic
God you know the most powerful God in in
our world system
anyway but uh yeah I mean ult originally
Buddhism was
atheistic so arene second question here
can you give your mother-in-law a shout
out I don't know why she wants me to
yell at at my
mother-in-law but
ah okay and she she didn't give me the

sweater though for Christmas it's really
a nice

sweater so I'll just move on next

question here this is from Stevens and

please forgive me for the stage shout

where you don't want me really Belling

into this

microphone so I mean just consider that

to be a

shout next question is from Stevens and

Steven says there exists a leftand path

idea of trying to willfully destroy your

Sam scaras by burning them out and

causing Vaga I don't know why Stevens is

preferring Sanskrit here to poly what

Different Strokes for different

folks I guess I should should uh start
back at the beginning here there exists
a left-and path idea of trying to
willfully destroy your some scaras by
burning them out and causing vagia and
vagia is Vaga and po which means
dispassion uh this is the idea that at a
certain point actions that formerly
caused us mind states of clinging and
addiction cease to have an appeal or
pull like they did and therefore cease
generating Karma because we realize the
reality that the fruits of these actions
are tainted by the three marks of
existence these marks are revealed by
trying and repeatedly failing to find
something permanent Something Free of

suffering and something indicative of a self in the fruits of actions commonly held by mainstream Society to be pleasurable or to yield pleasurable phenomena in one famous example of this girf told a man who was struggling with a smoking addiction to quit smoking then to start smoking again but this time don't get addicted quote unquote I feel this profound Parable contains the essence of left-hand path theory gerf terms his way the way of the clever man the path with the shortest practice time to Enlightenment similar to what VA vajana practitioners think about contract Buddhist practices on the other

side of the spectrum gerf lists the
Asana based practices of the fakir or
the Hat Yogi as the longest possible
path to Enlightenment followed by metab
based practices of priests and
devotional types and then mindfulness
and knowledge-based practices of monks
and yanis the practice second in speed
and efficacy only to the leftand path or
the way of the clever man what do terava
Andor its monks have to say about this
and what is your opinion or belief on
the matter does this shorter more
dangerous path to Enlightenment exist
for some people this kind of thing can
can it does exist and it can be quick
but it's it's much more dangerous

because there are a lot of people who just fool themselves you know they'll they'll have sex a lot they're sex addicts and so they decide well I'll just make sex into a sexual into a spiritual practice I'll do Tantra and then they just wallow in sensuality they think that they're doing some spiritual practice I think they're doing Tantra but really they're sex addicts and they just can't can't get enough of it so also there's one thing I would say here with regard to gf's advice to the person who was smoking I mean and that you should that he should quit smoking and

then start smoking again but this time not be addicted to it I mean that's not realistic because to nicotine is is like a physically addictive drug if you take enough of it you you get addicted uh regardless of your your intentions or your

attitude so maybe he's just talking about mental addiction but when you're physically addicted you start going through withdrawals if you don't have the stuff that you're relying on then yeah that's that's just addiction regardless of uh your attitude I think but um yeah the left-hand path it can work for some people but um the way it usually

works is you've got a worldly person and this I mean the Buddha was like this too and he had I mean if we can believe the the tradition I mean he had three palaces one for the cold season one for the hot season one for the rainy season his entire domestic staff was young women you know he had essentially a harem of female servants and musicians and dancing girls and anything he wanted he got and then he had enough wisdom to realize that even though he's got everything he wants it's still not satisfying him and that's one reason why Western monks are often more serious than Asian monks not only are they

having to go against their tradition but most western monks have already you know they've had their share of sensuality you know they've they've had wine women in song they've had sex drugs and rock and roll and still they weren't satisfied they realized that that is just not the way to be reliably happy it's it's just up and down it's a roller coaster ride so then they just leave it behind they don't just go into it deeper as a way of just burning out these attachments or whatever because it's not necessary once you've wallowed in sensuality enough and have the wisdom to realize that it's really not making you

a happier

person you might have more fun but

that's different from being you know

deeply satisfied and

content and also Al it's just uh all

this distraction is really it's just a

kind of Illusion you're just being

distracted by Illusions all around

you

so generally the ter ofoten approach I

mean the Buddha the Buddha took this

route is you wallow in the sensuality at

first and then you realize that it's

just not getting you where you want to

get or it's not making you really happy

and then you let it go you don't just

keep wallowing in it or you don't keep trying to use it as a tool because it's just kind of burned itself out and so you move on to renunciation and aestheticism but some people who can just stay in it you know it's like Osho would teach this kind of stuff Paul load would teach this kind of stuff to some degree uh Jay Krishna myty would teach this just do whatever you want to do but then you know do it mindfully you know do it with choiceless awareness or just a clear mind and just be aware of what you're doing and just feel the feelings that it causes and all that um but most people like I said they just get distracted and lost in it so it can work

quickly and effectively for some people
just to do the tantric route but more
often than not it's going to
backfire so I mean you got the semi
tonric route that I've already described
where you wallow in the
sensuality until you finally realize
that it's not making you really deeply
happy you know it's not giving you what
you want so then you just let go of it
and move on to something else which is
you know in in early Buddhism it's
radical renunciation and
austerity and
meditation
self-restraint so I guess I answered

that I mean it's certainly the the
tonric route certainly is n endorsed in
Buddhism but or at least not in early
Buddhism but I mean it it uh it has
worked for some people I
suppose seems to it worked fairly well
for Paul

low but anyway I'll just move on to the
next question here this is from Joe Doe
and Joe do says what does Buddha's
swastika

represent and I really don't know what
the

original like symbolic meaning of the
the the hooked cross you know it's like
the like a plus sign with the edges kind
of bent and it goes the opposite

direction of the the German National Socialist swastika although they they took it from India I mean swastika is itself a Sanskrit word and it means something like good Weare you know good benefit something like that the the Sue is equivalent to like Greek EU it means good and the astia is something with regard to you know benefit or welfare so I mean it was like a good luck sign in Ancient India and you know the Buddha will have like it on his chest sometimes or on the palm of his hand sometimes it's just like a sign of blessing uh or good luck sign but what the the haken crits originally was

supposed to represent I'm not sure if
anything it could have just been just an
abstraction or it could have been the
Sun and there there's a good chance it
represented the sun that's just a wild
guess

though so I guess I'll just move on to
the next question from Joe

do how do you feel about the West
becoming a white minority in 30 years
well I'll be 90 years old then there
won't be much I could do about it he
assuming that I'm still alive

um I don't think the entire West will
become a white minority that there's
going to be um like Eastern Europe is
going to be like a white enclave and

maybe some place like

Argentina you know there's going to be places that are still majority white probably some states or at least some certain areas in the United States will still be white

majority and if the white supremacists are correct I'm not saying they are but if the white supremacists are correct they got nothing to worry about because the superiority of the white ethnicity will cause them to rise

up and not be trampled underfoot so to speak so how do I feel about the West becoming a white minority in 30 years well I

mean how I feel about it is just
irrelevant I mean it's like it's not
going to change anything
you know it's just the way it is
apparently I mean it's not necessarily
going to be the case that there's going
to be a white minority in 30 years in
for example the United States because
you never know the white people with
maybe some other like some some other
ethnicities just sort of team up and say
that's it we've had enough you know
we're going to do something about this
and start mass deportations or something
it wouldn't surprise me I mean it would
take some sort of radical upheaval you
know maybe like the overthrowing of the

US Constitution or something in towards
the right instead of towards the left I
mean the left is are the ones who are
really trying to just do away with the
US

Constitution but uh yeah I mean it's
just I mean what's the point of of being
for it or against it or anything like
that I

mean I mean by being against it all you
do is you just unnecessarily make
yourself unhappy because you're you're
like you know at odds with the way
things are but who knows what what it's
going to be like 30 years from now I
mean it's it's impossible to really

predict you know I defy any science

fiction author to accurately portray

what the West is going to be like 30

years from

now so you just be here now I mean

that's good advice just be here now and

don't worry about the future don't stew

over the past

that this is this is this this is where

we are right here right now the power of

now so 30 years from now I

mean anything you imagine about what's

going to be what world the world is

going to be like what life is going to

be like 30 years from now it's almost

certainly dead

wrong so's move on to the next question

here this is from Buddha and Buddha says
and I do not understand this question I
have to admit Buddha says being is human
human or human is being have you asked
this and no I haven't asked it maybe
maybe that's the I answered the question
there I know I haven't asked this but I
mean it could be a play on words it's
like is being used as a noun in one
sense and as a verb in the other sense
being is human well being is human isn't
necessarily true for the all the beings
that aren't human but humans are beings
yeah so human is being is more correct
than being is human because not all
being is human but all human is

being I

guess so I I really don't fully

understand that question even though

it's a short simple

question but uh yeah the second second

part of this question is really easy

have you asked this and the answer is no

I haven't asked it so I'll just move on

the next question here this is from

pronav and pronav says could you just

speak about the dangers of samsara in

your own style so I get motivated to

practice well the dangers of some sorrow

well I mean the main dangers are

inevitable suffering and delusion

suffering and delusion are like the two

main qualities of living an

unenlightened life in Sam Sor so I mean if you don't mind being miserable and diluted then I guess I mean everybody suffers because misery is part of being miserable isn't it there aren't very many people who for whom misery makes them happy I mean there are some in a way some people just take a soulless in their misery or just make it part of their life story it's like their their narrative it's like part of who they are this this chronic ailment that they've had for 30 years it's just become part of who they are it's what they talk about and I mean they wouldn't know what to do with they something the cured of

it so there's and there's some people
that just enjoy being angry that kind of
thing and that's just the delusion of of
just being stuck in this roller coaster
ride of up and down happy
unhappy

so the dangers of some Sor yeah mean the
two main dangers is is suffering which
means I mean we're all going to die
essentially and delusion we don't know
the truth we we do not see reality we're
just like in this dream state you know
we're just sort of wandering we're
sleepwalking and I mean most people are
fine with that that's that's why they're
here is because they want to be here
it's not that you don't become

enlightened because you don't try hard enough it's all of us or practically all of us most overwhelming majority of us are trying to stay unenlightened without even realizing we're just wallowing in it we don't even want want anything else for the most part we think we'll be happy if we get the the big screen TV set or the new car or something but it doesn't really work that way and it's weird how human nature is the way it is where you think well if I get this I'll be happy and then you get like this Rush of dopamine or whatever so you are kind of happy when you get it but then you start being

unhappy again so you think well I need
that and then you get that and maybe
another Rush of dopamine and then you're
unhappy sort of like a drug addict where
you know you you feel good when you're
high and then you come down and you just
want the next

hit but the danger of samsar I guess is
uh death and you know pain

sickness old age

feebleness you know being separated from
what you love not getting what you want
getting what you don't want and just the

the accompanying delusion that is

keeping your eyes closed you know

keeping your eyes full of dust so that

you cannot see Ultimate Reality you

cannot see the truth you cannot see what
is

real because most people just assume
that this you know with rooms and doors
and books and mirrors and stuff it's all
that this is reality and it's just not
it's it's kind of a like a dream state
that we're in but yeah the main dangers
are suffering or dooka you know pain
misery sickness all of that and just
delusion and if you're okay with being
unhappy and diluted then well you got
things set
up but if you don't you don't
particularly like misery and delusion
then dhama is is about the best thing

you can

follow because even if you don't become fully enlightened you're going to at least reduce your suffering in delusion but I I'm not sure if I really answered this question correctly I don't know if I was really inspiring Prav to uh just Embark upon radical spiritual practice but for me the main reason why I became a mon is I wanted to know reality I wanted to know the truth other people they're mainly going for sensation of suffering but I was going for a sensation of delusion as well as I could and uh I mean it's not so much the dangers of samsara is just that there's

something much better than
samsara so yeah I mean for me I wasn't
trying to escape from suffering so much
as I was trying to just know reality and
I just noticed that I've got like these
horizontal bars of light crossing my
face and and upper body because the sun
is kind of going down and it's it's
showing through the blinds so maybe I
should close the blinds a little
better there that's much better isn't
it okay so with all due respect to Prav
and his
uh rather important profound question
here I hope I did well enough
um at present I don't really have a lot

of aversion for

samsara um I don't have a lot of craving
for it either it's just this is this is
where I'm situated right now so we make
the most of it and try to go through
life as wisely and consciously as we
can and uh realize that desire is the
cause of all

suffering and then once you have that
that in mind do as thou

Wilt so I'll just move on the next

question here and this is uh from

creel and creel says here is a question

what are your thoughts of nonduality or

Neo ad which I guess are both modern

versions of ADV vant I was interested in

them for quite some time in the past but

not anymore for two reasons the first is
that nonduality in in my opinion
emphasizes the non-existence of a self
to the point of negating the importance
of any effort performed for the sake of
Liberation if there is no one there is
no one to liberate kind of reasoning
while Buddhism gives right effort
importance the second is that nonduality
in my opinion sees suffering as a purely
subjective subtly selling the illusion
that after Liberation life becomes a
happy journey of love and light while
Buddhism at least according to my
understanding sees suffering as both
having a subjective and objective

component birth is suffering old age is suffering Etc in other words life has an inherent distressful quality in Buddhism which nonduality does not properly described blaming all suffering to the person inner

delusions well this is kind of a long complicated question with regard to Neo ADV I mean unless that's just like modern people talking about adita I'm not sure how it would differ from shankara or or like you know the original I mean ADV literally means non-duality and it's uh it's an interpretation of vant or the upanishadic tradition in India the upanishads so non-duality just

means that reality is is not
divided up into this and
that that it's I mean it's like a monism
a radical monism or
mysticism so I mean but I guess it
wouldn't necessarily be mysticism
because you have just philosophers who
aren't Mystics who are philosophizing
about it but but so really this Neo
ADV um yeah I don't have a lot of
experience with it other than like for
example in Mahayana Buddhism then or or
in the upanishads I mean I have been
exposed to that I have read a lot of
that kind of stuff read all the major
upanishads and probably all of the the

major mahayan stuff except for maybe
pure
land

so let's see I was interested in them
for quite some time in the past but not
anymore for two reasons so let's see
maybe I should divide this up make it a
little easier for

me okay okay nonduality in his opinion
emphasizes the non-existence of a self
to the point of negating the importance
of any effort performed for the sake of
Liberation yeah well I mean the thing i'
I've I tried to explain this before that
there really is no self to liberate but
what you got I mean I'm just sort of
maybe flogging a dead horse here but you

know you you got the block of marble you got this block of marble sitting on a featureless plain so the block of marble because you got nothing else to compare it with may as well just be sizeless you know arbitrary size and contained within that block of marble is every possible statue including pretty much every impossible statue it's all in there all at the same time to superimposed one on top the other you know every single molecule of of the every statue is already there in the right place you just have to omit the random Rock in order to have that statue but the statue is already there you know a sculptor

he's just liberating what's already

there in the

Rock so some of these statues are so

complicated that they become

self-aware and they think that they are

real and they think that they are

separate from everything else but I mean

it's a virtual statue with this virtual

belief that it is uh an individual

self and it it is dealing with a reality

so I mean really the path to Liberation

is just using this delusional

recursive mentality to cure itself of

its own delusion so that it just Fades

back into the block of

marble so I mean it's delusion

liberating

itself there's there's no

being that is liberating himself or

herself or it

self it's just the delusion that it's

separate curing Itself by whatever means

introspection mindfulness Detachment

just the this

virtual belief system which is really

right there I mean it's it's one of the

possible statues it's just as real as

any other but uh it's not ultimately

real it's just virtually conditionally

real and it's this delusion that has to

cure

itself

so it's kind of hard to

explain it really is it's it's hard to grasp

it so let's see

here Buddhism does give right effort importance but it's just a matter of emphasis or like perspective I mean essentially it's the same kind of thing on both sides it's just Buddhism is more practical maybe that's that's the point Buddhism is more practical whereas ADV is more philosophical it's just kind of mindblowing and it's just you become enlightened largely through just having your mind

blown this Gana yoga the the The Yoga of knowledge whereas buddhis Buddhism is more Raja yoga which is the the The Yoga

of

practice so let's see here his second reason for not having much use for nity is in his opinion it sees suffering as purely subjective subtly selling the illusion that after Liberation life becomes a happy journey of love and light while Buddhism at least according to his understanding sees suffering as both having a subjective and objective component in other words life has an inherently distressful quality in Buddhism which non Duality does not properly describe blaming all suffering on the person's inner delusions well I mean both are right I mean it is you

know it's like the delusion that this is
real that we are separate we've got this
separate ultimately real

self um I mean that's that's all there

is is the delusion and so it is

subjective because it's it's the

delusion that is the problem and the the

delusion is is

subjective so I mean after

Liberation it's not really a happy

Journey of love and light there's no

more Journey you know after Liberation I

mean that's I mean unenlightenment is

the journey once you become Enlighten

the journey is Journey is pretty much

over seems to

me well it's uh it's just would be just

neutral just sort of uh the empty set in
a
sense

so yeah I mean I'm not exactly sure what
the question is here what are my
thoughts on nonduality or Neo Advaita it's
more it's in a way more cerebral than
Buddhism I mean Buddhism is plenty
cerebral but Advaita is really is it's like
the the spiritual path is is of just
philosophy it's just blowing your mind
through

profundity whereas Buddhism does have
like more of the the Practical
guidelines of you know how you do you
know how you how you practice you know

how to meditate and so

forth

so yeah I

mean I'm no expert on on Neo advita

because frankly i' never even heard the

term Neo ADV until I came across this

question I mean ADV I

know which is just you know um like

upanishadic philosophy interpreted in a

non-dualistic way

but uh you know it's all

God all Brahman thou art that

t but we're getting some real like

subtle deep questions that are not easy

to answered

today so I guess I'll just move on next

question here this is from heward the

wake and heward the Wake says the following question is occasioned by your talk the inter interview with bante Gvarano on Buddhism flavored social justice and what to do about it on July 25th 2021 except it's not about social justice but the part which focused on alcohol which I don't remember is few years

ago um I mean I remember the video I just don't remember the uh the part what we were talking about alcohol but anyways here where the waight continues I know that Tibetan medicine recommends alcohol as being medicinal in small quantities some people indeed go

further such as the late philosopher
Roger Scruton in *I Drink Therefore I Am*
a philosopher's guide to Wine 2009 and
on page 132 it says it is true as I have
suggested that wine sheds a certain
light into the inwardness the Atman of
contingent things and it points towards
without providing another way in which
being might be known

unquote

uh I will leave to one son the question
of the existence of the *otton* exclamation
point what is your advice on taking
alcohol whether or not and how much for
Buddhist

Layman

okay so I mean it's the fifth precept is

taking Ale Wine and other intoxicants
which cause clouded of mind or which
cause

heedlessness and I mean it's just right
there in black and white that to drink
alcohol is a violation of the fifth
precept

so um regardless of any benefits you
might get from drinking alcohol I mean
it's a violation of the fifth precept so
if you are a Buddhist and you do drink
alcohol and a lot of Buddhists do I had
two beers last night didn't get drunk
but it had two

beers um I mean you're just breaking the
precept you have to acknowledge that

you're not following the precept
correctly I mean I've I've met some some
guys in Burma they're telling me you
know I follow two and a half
precepts which is better than nothing
at least they know they're breaking the
precept they're not being dishonest with
themselves and trying to use some kind
of what is it casuistry is that is that
a word casuistry where they're just
making excuses for breaking the rule and
saying that they're not really breaking
it you know like monks who are handling
credit cards or something and say
they're not handling money because it's
plastic or monks some Mahayana monks you
know they'll eat a meal in the afternoon

they'll call it medicine meal I spent
stayed briefly at a Mahayana Monastery
before I was ordained and they'd have
dinner every evening called the medicine
meal because of course they're not
supposed to be eating in the in the
afternoon and so they say well it's
medicine or like monks who keep extra
clothes they're not supposed to do that
but they say it's accessory cloth it's
not a robe it's accessory cloth and then
they just wear it as a robe it's
obviously a robe so I mean that kind of
stuff is it's getting into the realm of
dishonesty in my opinion whereas I mean
if you try to come up with clever

excuses for drinking alcohol it's
medicinal you know it's not it's not
booze it's medicine then yeah I mean
you're just kind of deceiving yourself
you might not deceive anybody
else but uh at least you're deceiving
yourself and uh I mean you might as well
just take the hit it's like well I'm
breaking this rule it's I'm not
following the five precepts completely
I might be following four precepts but
not all
five and there's I mean it's nothing
horribly wrong with that I don't think
there's anything necessarily
immoral in having one or two drinks you
don't even get drunk you there might be

nothing more than just like a very like
a subliminal little glow going after
like two

drinks but I'm not much of a lightweight
so I can even before I became a monk I I
could handle my liquor pretty well I was
sober all the way down to the

floor so yeah that would be my advice on
taking alcohol for a Buddhist laay

person is if you're G to take it then
you just acknowledge that you're
breaking the

precept so I think I'll just move on to
uh P the wake's next question which is
is there a meditation manual you can
recommend um and one of the meditation

manuals or books on meditation that improve the most was I think it's the heart of Buddhist Meditation by venerable uh

nyona Venerable nyanaponika who was a German monk he was a disciple of Nana Tila who was also a German monk way back like um the

1940s so yeah I mean it's about Sadi batana it's essentially a commentary on the Maha Saadi batana sua um another

good book on meditation is Joseph Goldstein means uh the experience of insight those two kind of stand out in my memory as good meditation guides

um the standard meditation manual for a

terab Buddhist would be the wisi
manga um ideally Yan's
translation so but I mean thei Monga I
don't think that Buddha Goa was much of
a meditator and my experience with
scholar monks who are you know sitting
in rooms
writing out learned treatises like
commentaries is they they generally are
not into like austerity and and like
intensive meditation some of them are
but most of them are
not so if you're going to read a
meditation manual it's good to read a
meditation manual from uh a meditation
master and not a scholar uh another good

meditation manual that I don't remember
the title of it it's U I got it from the
Buddhist publication Society but it's
uh it's like a transcript of what all
yogis or meditators would have to hear
when they would attend a mahasi retreat
this is like back in the 1970s when
mahasi Seattle was still alive and just
about anything by mahasi seato on
practicing mindfulness meditation is
going to have a lot of useful practical
information in it but if you want a
manual that tells you like how to do all
the different kinds of meditation not
just mindfulness meditation or sa batana
then uh yeah you might start with the
wisi Maga because I don't know of any

other meditation manuals that give like the full spectrum of all the different meditation techniques most of most of which nobody much practices anymore like the de contemplating decomposing corpses in a chnal field not very many people do that anymore where most of the the casin meditations aren't practiced anymore or you just meditating on a on a colored disc or a disc of uh Earth or or whatever you can you can meditate on the four one of the four uh elements you know earth water Wind and Fire through casin meditation also and uh most people just don't do it anymore I mean mainly most meditation

manuals you come across especially in
the west would be on mindfulness
meditation or so-called weasa although I
never liked using the term we for
mindfulness meditation
or so I'm just going to move on to the
next question this is from harim cthul
and harim cthul says forgive me my
insolence but does your life not show
that Buddhism leads
nowhere is the path to Liberation not
better sought through acceptance of both
light and darkness rather than rejection
of them people you consider enlightened
are usually far from being solemn
Buddhists
and somebody else commented below this

on the YouTube video and they were saying that watching my videos where I explain Buddhism has confirmed him to some degree in this that Buddhism leads nowhere which is kind of disappointing that I'm actually causing people to lose faith in

Buddhism but there are a few misconceptions here uh one is that the path he says here is the path to Liberation not better sought to acceptance of both light and darkness rather than rejection of them I mean what do you think a monk who is a radical renunciant like living in a jungle you think he's rejecting both

light and darkness I mean he's he's an
aesthetic you know I mean how does an
aesthetic reject both light and
darkness so I mean that in itself
strikes me as a misconception but
another thing here is I mean buddh he
says does not my life show that Buddhism
leads nowhere I mean where is it
supposed to
lead you know it's like be here now I
mean where does be here now lead it
doesn't lead anywhere you know this is
all we got is right here right now so
where is it supposed to lead to the
enlightenment of some being who doesn't
ultimately
exist so I mean that's kind of a strange

Point

too but this is this path of Liberation
is it not better sought through
acceptance of both light and darkness I
mean that's sort of like what Stevens
above was talking about with regard to
the leftand path I mean you take that
too far and you've got Tantra and it
usually doesn't work because you just
get lost in it you're surrounded by
distractions which ultimately eventually
distract you and just lead you astray
and that's you know 10 years later you
realize
you realize that you haven't been
practicing

correctly

so people you consider enlightened are usually far from being solemn Buddhist well I mean you don't have to be solemn to be a Buddhist I mean like in Ancient India then yeah I mean they had this cultural thing going where I mean you were like strict aesthetic just complete renunciate and it was like you would not tolerate any kind of any kind of like uh uh sentimentality or anything like that you know it's just like it's cold just ice cold strict you know it's like according to Abid dama um an enlightened being just cannot laugh or cry and I I kind of doubt that I just I mean I'm a Buddhist but I mean you don't have to

believe all of this just really strict
straight laed ancient Indian
stuff that that's not really it's not
not really the the the essence of
Buddhism the essence of Buddhism
essentially just accept whatever happens
and it makes it easier to accept both
light and darkness if you're in kind of
a controlled situation sort of like the
way scientific experiments work where
you have to have a controlled situation
because I mean you can't just have It
Wide Open chaos and and get
progress so you do simplify the
situation to make it easier to accept
both light and darkness and you're not

rejecting light and darkness other than
you're just simplifying it enough so
that you can make progress and I mean to
say that Buddhism leads nowhere I mean
is is reduced suffering and reduced
delusion

nowhere I mean maybe I mean where is
reduced suffering It's Not Over Yonder
It's Not Over

Yonder

so I'm really not sure exactly how to
answer question questions like this
maybe you've noticed that from the way
I'm kind of wandering around in this in
this

answer feel that Buddhism leads nowhere
well I mean if you want to assume that

uh you know less suffering and less
delusion is nowhere that it's it's just
not worth having then that's your call I
mean you if you want to be unhappy and
diluted nobody is stopping
you but you're trying maybe this person
is you

know like uh implying that you get
better reduction of unhappiness and
delusion by acceptance of both light and
darkness which of course Buddhism does
teach I mean you just accept whatever
happens I mean that's pretty much what
uh Conti is it's one of the the 10
parames kti literally means
acceptance

so I mean UPA also is a kind of acceptance It's not sort of a grasping kind of you know taking something in acceptance but it's just you know you're not you're at peace with whatever happens and Buddhist monks I mean they're at peace with whatever happens supposedly you read the text you know they can be getting you know their arms and legs chopped off you know they all these things could happen to them you know they're living in dangerous jungles full of Bandits and tigers and so forth and I mean it's not like they're just hiding in a monastery trying to avoid any light or
Darkness

so I mean different people require
different P I suppose one size does not
fit

all but I'm not sure if I even answered
this question yet I'm I'm just going to
read it again because like I said the
questions this time are uh I don't know
they're they're higher difficulty level
some of them forgive me my insolence but
does your life not show that Buddhism
leads nowhere I mean what way would my
life show that I mean am I worse off for
for being a Buddhist I don't get that
part is the path to Liberation not
better S through acceptance of both
light and darkness rather than rejection

of them um yeah within reason I mean you follow the middle path you don't just wallow in self-indulgence which is one extreme and you don't torture yourself wallow in self- torture which is the Other Extreme you just live your life take what comes and you deal with it wisely and simplifying things makes it easier to do that so that you don't get distracted or just just knocked off your feet just the middle path anyways I don't know if I've answered that or not I'm just going to move on to the next question here this is from yugao and yugao is says do you think that practice fake it till you make it

can be part of the Right View well I
don't think it'd be part of Right View
because it's he says it's like a
practice so it'd be more like right
practice fake it till you make it I mean
to some

degree I mean if you want to be an arant
to imitate an arant to superficially
outwardly try to live like an Aran is
not a bad idea I mean it might not fit
you at all you might just be his
hysterical and just climbing the walls
like some people do at meditation
Retreats where just the the sensory
deprivation and the self-restraint and
everything in slow motion and silence

and not talking with people you know
they just can't handle it and they crack
up I mean that does happen but to the
extent that you can imitate an
enlightened
being then yeah it's it it'll help you
to go in that
direction but fake it till you make it
doesn't mean that you just pass yourself
off as an enlightened being you know
he's becoming a
fraud yeah that's that's not good either
but to try to
imitate uh an enlightened being it's
fine you know it's like Christians try
to live a Christlike life I mean it
makes sense even though they themselves

are not particularly Christlike at least
they're they're trying and it probably
brings them a little closer to being
Christlike same way with

Buddhism so I'm going to move on to the
next question here and this is from

White Ash Piper and D Piper says do you
think putting an animal down and then in
parenthesis he's got

dog takes away from their death

experience um I guess I mean in some

cases but then again not all death

experiences are all that

great

um yeah I mean just dying in your sleep

might be taking away from your own death

experience but that doesn't mean you
shouldn't Die In Your

Sleep um

yeah it's in a way it's the the only bad
karma in euthanizing an animal would be
in your own sort of you're meddling with
some other being's Karma and it's just
the effect that it has on your own mind
just sort of residual doubts or the just
the subconscious effect of cutting off
another life

force um deliberately something like
that it's it's subtle and I mean

Buddhism like ancient Indian Buddhism is
uncompromising you know youth an Asia is
still killing but I

mean sometimes I mean it's just better

to take the hit I mean as a lay person
that's it's sort of like the stoicism of
like old Buddhism I've talked about this
in like blog posts where I mean if you
can live the life of a saint live the
life of a saintly renunciant yeah well
you go ahead and do that but if you're a
lay person you've got like a family to
protect for example youve got a home to
defend if necessary then you have to
take the hit you have to say you just
have to bravely face the fact that you
are setting yourself up for some bad
fruition in the future by doing these
things but it's your duty to do them and
so you just have to have a little

bravery to face the fact that you know
you're going to be taking a hit later on
by doing this

so for a lay person I think in some
cases youth in Asia not only of a dog
but maybe even a grandma I

mean I mean it's it's not all bad it's
going to be I mean there there is no
pure bad or pure good unless unless

you're like an enlightened being and
then just good and bad are just you know

the whole Duality is is just set aside
and that's like a higher good but um I

mean if you're doing it out of

compassion and the dog is suffering then

you may be taking a hit but on the on

the same you know by the same token you

know you're doing something you're doing
a compassionate act which is going to
have some positivity in it
too and taking away from their death
experience I mean dying in misery is not
a good experience it's like if you die
in a state of misery then that misery is
Bad Karma like the more you're miserable
the more Bad Karma you're making it's
actually in Buddhism it is immoral to be
unhappy because you're making more karma
you're sort of reinforcing the
unhappiness by just adding to
it so it's not
necessarily bad to take away their death
experience I mean you might just want to

anesthetize them give them some
painkiller or something and then just
let nature take its
course but uh I mean if it's just a long
lingering death I I can imagine
situations where just putting them out
of their misery is actually I mean it
can arguably even be more good than bad
but there's going to be some good mixed
in with the bad
anyway and you just have to uh face the
fact that I mean you're going to face
the consequences of everything you do
every volitional Act is going to have
consequences
so so I kind of punted the ball on that
one didn't I I'm not sure that I really

even answered it sometimes I can sit
here and talk for five 10 minutes and
when I'm done I'm not still not sure if
I even answered the
question but taking away from it their
death experience is not necessarily a
bad thing because some death experiences
can be particularly
icky and if they don't experience it
then it just wasn't their comma to
experience experience it after all but
then that leads into you know murder
victims and so forth so let's not even
go there I'm moving on to the next
question immediately this is from
popcorn

boxing and popcorn boxing with with
regard to the previous Q&A says I am
glad it recorded this time would you
have redone it if it had not recorded
again and yeah I'd have to say yeah I'd
have to do it a third time because I'm
not just GNA like well it didn't work so
I'm not answering the
questions or I could skip a week and
then I'd have like 80 questions to
answer so

yeah I'm glad I didn't have to do it a
third time but I probably would have so
the next question we got a few kind of
unusual questions here and this is from
VA China is coming [__]

cute and uh VC here says when you were a

monk for 30 years did you know no fap
the whole time was it
hard and I mean yeah I mean it's
strictly against the rules for a monk to
deliberately have an orgasm unless it's
in a while he's asleep in a dream and if
you break that rule then you have to
take Penance for six days and six nights
it's called the sad offense it's the
most serious level of offense after
excommunication and then after you've
done the required penance
which is difficult and inconvenient you
have to attend a ceremony with at least
20 other monks all in good standing to
reinstate you as a monk in good standing

and it's really a pain in the neck and there were times when I mean you I'm a guy and especially when I was younger I mean sometimes I would be so horny I'd just be climbing the walls I'd want to just cry or how like a dog or something I was so horny but I mean jerking off was not really a viable option unless I was just going to become an unconscientious Monk and not confess my offenses and just pretend like I didn't have them and so forth which was not a route I wanted to take so there were times when you know you're just really horny and you're not intending to jerk all the way off you know you're don't not spanking the puppy

you're just kind of petting a little bit
and then you know it's just you're so
overcharged so to speak that just it's
like playing with a gun and it goes
off that happened a few times and in
really doubtful occasions I'd be like
psychoanalyzing myself I mean did I have
any intention to do this and if you just
have doubt in order to resolve the doubt
I would just do the Penance
anyway but it's is really it's really a
pain in the neck best avoid it
especially if you're a
monk so anyway the next part of this
question here now that you have a sweat
fart

that's not a very nice way to refer to a
lady are you doing no fap if not when
will you will she be okay with it have
you spoken with her about tits and I
assume he said I assume that's a typo
and he meant to say this and it was like
a Freudian slip or
something man I mean it and then he says
I mean it question
mark so am I doing no fap
no I'm not doing I mean no fap literally
means no masturbation so I guess yeah
I'm doing no masturbation because I
don't even need to I got a I got a woman
who has needs
also so if not when will you well if my
sweetheart passes away before I do God

forbid so to speak inshah or if I just
get too old to get it up then yeah I
guess

so but when you have a partner and
you're sleeping in the same bed with her
then uh yeah I mean you have sort of a a
responsibility to at least try to make
her happy in certain ways it's just a
natural urge anyway

right I mean if you don't want to do
that stuff I mean be celibate is fine
but I'm not celibate

anymore so let's see here have I spoken
with her about this I don't I don't
recall it because I have no intention of
doing it I mean would she be okay with

it I don't think so no I don't think

she'd be okay with

that um so okay I think I answered that

little series of questions that or sub

questions see we got one two three four

question marks in that one question so

now I'll just move on to this next

question which is another kind of

strange one also on the topic of noof

FAP what age does a person not get

credit for no fap for example

88-year-old people I do not think have

sex or masturbate so it is like going to

a ho house with a chopped off dick and

getting reward in heaven for not having

dick sex with the hoes even guys who are

married do know fap women go crazy

because they think they control you
because you are always ready and they
are not so now you are not always ready
like her even though you are but you are
no fap so you are once again in
control

um yeah my my relationship really
doesn't work that way I'm happy to
say um but let's just get up to the to
the main question up here what age does
a person not get credit for no
fap I mean it's like there is no age
limit I mean when you hit 65 it's not
like you start getting Social Security
and you stop getting credit for no fap
it's it's like when the urge goes away

then of course you're no longer

restraining

yourself so if you get too old to have

the urge then I guess you're not getting

credit for not doing what you don't have

the urge for

anymore and for some people they got

really weak sex drives I mean that can

be pretty much their entire

life but I mean if you're really just a

lustful

person then uh yeah I mean so long as

you're a lustful person then I mean it's

not really credit I mean it's just sort

of you're practicing self-restraint and

and you're I assume you're getting good

karma for the

self-restraint but uh I mean it is like
a spiritual practice you are weakening
your karmic

urges by

self-restraint so I guess I answer that
question I mean when you when you're no
longer really practicing self-restraint
because you no longer have the urge to
do it then then you're really not doing
anything you're not accomplishing
anything you're not earning

anything so I'll just move on next

question and this is from

arcat and our cats

says our cats I say says hi I've been

practicing Buddhism for four or so Years

starting in tibetan and following
strictly aan Sona and biku Bodi I agree
with Buddha's view on becoming free but
I am stuck with thinking if All Humans
can't become enlightened due to many
people making the world run including
having children then are his teachings
realistic I feed everyone no I feel
everyone is entitled to Liberation but
there's many other necessary ways of
living that won't provide people with
the situations to become liberated and
also the monastics wouldn't survive
without lay people it really makes my
view of Buddhist Buddhist teachings
being ultimate create doubt well I mean
like I was saying earlier most most

people don't even want to become
liberated most people are just wallowing
in it they they have no concept of
Liberation even if they had a concept
they wouldn't want it so it is realistic
because Liberation is only for a few
people I mean if you got a system that
says everyone gets liberated like some
kinds of Christianity where all you got
to do is believe in Jesus and you're
saved that is not
realistic so it's realistic to say that
most people just aren't ripe they're
just not ready for it
but you can do what you can to at least
get closer to it you can you can make

progress towards Liberation and that's what most Buddhists are going for they're I mean they're they're too humble or just too honest with themselves to think that they're going to try that they're got much of a chance of becoming enlightened in this life maybe a little too humble in some cases I mean you shouldn't just shut the door to the very idea of becoming aligned in this life because you never know what's going to happen so let's see I feel everyone is entitled to Liberation well I guess you could say Everyone's entitled to it but most people don't want it

so I mean Everyone's entitled to go out
and pee in the snow but not everybody
wants to pee in the
snow to give kind of a weird
example just because yeah it's just kind
of a strange statement here aan sona's
good good monk though he's uh the Abbot
of Burkin Forest Monastery in British
Columbia and
Canada

see stuck with thinking if all humans
can't become enlightened due to too many
people making the world run including
having children then our as teachings
realistic yeah that makes them realistic
because most people just don't want

Liberation and I feel everyone is entitled Liberation but there's many other necessary ways of living that won't provide people with situations become liberated well as they're choice or else they just don't they just don't know and also the monastics wouldn't survive without L people that's fine but I mean most people just don't want to become monastics anyway so yeah I think that the the very fact that very few people become Enlighten makes it more realistic I mean Christianity originally was that way you know many are called few are chosen that even most Christians I mean like I think it's St

Augustine just admitted that even most Christians are going to go to hell I mean is that realistic I mean what's more realistic than admitting that just most people not only are not going to make it most people don't even want to make it so I'll just move on to the next question here this is from keep the vinia and keep the vinia says what are chakras and do you believe in them uh I've read a lot about chakras you know Ram do I mention a lot he was like one of my first teachers through books when I was a teenager you know he talked about chakras because he was you

know he was trained in a mainly in a
Hindu tradition and chakras are are like
Hindu it's it's a Hindu concept Buddhism
like Orthodox terraa doesn't talk about
chakras at all um probably in China they
got their own
systems so yeah chakras are kind of
unique as far as I know you know the
seven chakras you know you've got the um
I mean I'm No Authority on chakras but
You' got like the the one that's at the
root of the like your
tailbone kind of the root of the penis
and for guys I guess or is that right
yeah it's uh it's just survival you know
it's like the lowest level of mentality
where you're actually conscious is just

survival you know food and shelter and
this kind of a thing and then the second
which is just above that kind of below
intermediate between the the first
chakra and like your belly butt the
danten I guess it's called in Chinese
that's like the sexual
chakra so that's first chakra is
survival second is sex third is kind of
in the the belly or I mean it's it's all
these chakras are like along your spinal
column there's like a spiritual
equivalent of your spinal column and the
chakras are like nodes going up this
this energy column and the third one is
uh like status and power money that kind

of a thing and and the ROM da says that
most normies like most people who aren't
very spiritual never really get above
the third

chakra that you know the the first three
chakras which is just survival sex and
just status and power that kind of a
thing that um you know that's like the
world for for most

people then the fourth chakra is the
heart chakra which is compassion where
you start realizing that everybody else
is on me you know it's like they we're
all kind of

connected and then and then I'm starting
to to really get into the realm I'm not
really familiar with and there's like

the throat chakra is the fifth one and
then like the third eye is the sixth one
and then the crown of the head is the
seventh chakra when that opens you're
fully enlightened and I don't think
there's any

scientific basis for this any empirical
basis it's a a belief system that
works so that gives it some validity
like pragmatic validity that you know
it's it's like a way of dealing with
different levels of consciousness sort
of like Ken Wilbur uses like the color
code thing for different stages of
Consciousness it's kind of similar to
that it's just sort of like a gimmick

that got turned into like a religious
Dogma um if somebody can prove to me
that these chakras really exist that's
fine but I mean even if they don't have
like a scientific empirical reality the
fact that it's a way of helping people
to wrap their heads around different
levels of consciousness and it's it's
used as a tool to help them make
progress that's fine sort of like Abid
dama works for some people Chinese you
know like the Chinese equivalent to this
or ayurvedic equ equivalence to
understanding how the body works even
though it might not be verified by
Western
science still I mean it's sort of like a

gimmick that

works

so yeah so I mean I kind of have a

general idea of what chakras are um and

I really don't have much trouble using

the system you know talking about

chakras even though I'm not exactly sure

what the Throat chakra does

especially anybody who's an authority on

throat

chakras is welcome to leave a comment

in the comments

below so I'll just move on to the second

second question from Keth the Vinia

which

is what does it mean if all things are

empty and different schools of Buddhism
will teach you different things but I
think the original meaning of sunata or
emptiness sh in in Sanskrit is that
everything's are everything is empty of
an individual self

Essence that it's just kind of
arbitrary or it's ultimately delusional
to think that anything is intrinsically
separate from anything else you know
it's it's an artifact of perception
differentiation papancha is an artifact
of perception taking it for taking it
seriously thinking that it represents
reality is a
delusion so I mean it's not like in
platonic philosophy where um like a cell

phone is is is like pervaded by this
essence of cell

phiness no I don't think so even even
schopenhauer believed in in this
platonic um

ideals and uh yeah they don't exist in
my opinion that uh in Buddhism it's like
something appears to exist so long as
that there are these conditions
surrounding it that that cause it to
appear to exist and each of those
conditions itself appears to exist
because of this this this this this vast
Unthinkable web of conditions that none
of which is ultimately real it's just to
have a system that's going to stay

stable for at least a trillionth of a second you have to have some kind of like reinforcing pattern to it and so in in the block of marble the uncarved Block You've got these various patterns that lend a certain stability to to the whole of the of the pattern just through a kind of regularity or predictability it's it's really hard to explain this kind of stuff I mean I'm just sort of just blundering into this in a way trying to explain this and it's not working very well but I mean ultimately things are empty because they lack an individual self Essence including people and that's why Buddhism teaches there is no self ultimately because a self would

be like an ultimately real self Essence

like a

soul and Buddhism says that there is

nothing not a grain of sand Not a Human

Being not a planet not a sun that has an

individual self

Essence that it's all the uncarved blond

that is

artificially divided up into Parts but

the the parts are not ultimately real

they're just conditionally or

provisionally or potentially or

virtually

real and uh yeah there's an like read

the mul majamaa Kaka if you want to

understand emptiness I mean according to

the mul majamaa Kaka dependent core

Rising is emptiness because I mean

things don't exist because they have

this inherent existence they exist they

exist or seem to exist because of all

these conditions causing that to exist

and if the conditions stop the thing

itself that you think is ultimately real

or has some sort of inherent

individuality also

stops

so I hope I answered that question me

you can write entire books on it which

nagara did and many other people have

also written on the topic of

emptiness but I mean what ultimately

what it means is that everything is

empty of an individual self

Essence that it just seems to exist

because conditions cause it to seem to

exist and those conditions also just

seem to exist because other conditions

cause them to seem to exist add

infinum so I'll just move on to the last

question which is really the last

question the very last question which

was asked like half an hour hour before

I sat down to do this and this is from

Mama and mama says what are the top

three easiest things you would recommend

with regard to incorporating Dharma into

your daily life and I sorry to say it

but number one to be get rid of your TV

set just don't watch

television and it's mainly the

commercials I mean if you can watch

television without commercials and

without like

Netflix like Neo Marxist propaganda you

know like even I mean I watched the The

Walking Dead pretty much binge watched

it you know all 11 seasons of it in

Rapid succession and I mean

it's you know I I mentioned this before

it's essentially it's a good story but

there's all this propaganda in it some

of my favorite movies like The Matrix

it's got propaganda and it's you know

it's like the toughest badass in the

whole movie is this attractive young

woman you know what are the odds
especially when it's like just about
every action movie has one of
these and then like The Walking Dead
it's like like around season seven it
was like all on like at least one⁴ of
the main characters were
homosexual it's like black people are R
like running most of the the communities
and there's nothing wrong with black
people but it's just not very realistic
like there's this one Community called
Hilltop the first like when you're first
introduced to Hilltop the leader is this
totally weasy white guy and then he he
gets eliminated he's replaced by a woman

a white woman and then she gets she goes
off does her own thing she's replaced by
a gay guy and then he gets killed and
he's replaced by a lesbian woman it's
just

like you know is this just random chance
that it's always like this you know I'm
not even really complaining I mean like
The Walking Dead it's it's worth
watching I if you're into zombies I mean
The Walking Dead has good slow zombies I
mean fast zombies I mean they just be
screwed but slow zombies are are
manageable I

guess but of course I'm just totally
totally digressing here because Mama
asked about the three easiest things you

would recommend regarding incorporating
dhama into your daily life and here I am
talking about zombies

so number one get rid of your TV set

two I mean the top three easiest

things man I mean I should have probably

just figured this out before I did the

video but I I usually try to do this

thing you know just spontaneously and

not through some rehearsed speech so

another

thing uh be aware of the five precepts

so that even if you're breaking one at

least you know you're breaking one I

mean if if you're a Buddhist I mean if

you're not a Buddhist then it's not that

big of a deal I mean if you're a
Christian drinking alcohol is no big
deal because Jesus drank alcohol which
kind of helps to indicate that drinking
alcohol isn't really all that horrible
it's not going to disqualify you from
being a wise
person but let's
see um maybe do a little meditation even
for just uh five minutes a day five
minutes is better than zero
minutes so get rid of your TV
set try to see try to keep what precepts
that you can keep although like I said I
drank two beers last
night which is more than I usually drink
but

still and uh maybe just try to do a little bit of meditation or another one would just be try to just practice some Elementary mindfulness you know there's certain things that you do every day like brushing your teeth you can just turn that into a little mindfulness ritual it'd be like meditation where you're brushing your teeth mindfully you know you're aware of the pressure of your hand against the toothbrush you're aware of the muscles causing it to go up and down you're aware of the brushing noises you're aware of the sensations on your teeth and gums you're aware of the thoughts that arise while you're doing

it like maybe I should uh emphasize this
tooth a little more that kind of a thing
or just walking I mean just walking can
be a meditative

experience or another one is like uh
simple mindfulness of

like if you get irritated or annoyed

like you're driving a car and you get

irritated by someone who you know they

just cut you off or something just be

aware of the the irritation arising so

that you don't just get Swept Away by it

there's all kinds of little things you

can

do and I think the the three easiest

things that each person can do to

incorporate darma into their life it

would depend a lot on their own personality you know what what is it that works best for them but number one is get rid of your TV set and and I'm kind of a hypocrite because we've got TV sets in this house in fact there's three of them although uh only one of them is really on is really hooked up and I've been just like steadfastly resisting having there's one that's already in the bedroom that's my sweetheart put there and she wants a TV in the bedroom and I've just been resisting and resisting the whole time because personally I'd be happier if there was no TV sets at all in this house but when you live with

another person you have to compromise to some degree so one TV that actually works is in the living room and then the TV that's uh in the bedroom is uh I don't think it's even plugged in so I mean another another easy thing to uh incorporate D your deal life just be generous you know just help people in need if if you you know if you got more than them and they need it more than you then you know share the wealth I guess there's lots of little things you can do that uh can really make a difference so what the top three would be for each individual person like I say would probably depend on the individual person and just kind of what their

strengths and weaknesses are what so
that something that's easy for one
person might be difficult for another
just like generosity for example some
people are just naturally generous some
people are
not

so yeah I guess that's it and so I
answered all the questions and it's less
than two hours even by
golly so if you got any questions feel
free to include them in the comments
below this video and look at the URL
links including uh the books I've got on
Amazon and
uh I just burped here I am here I'm

ending this with with a belch but uh
yeah I mean like And subscribe if you
haven't already and be
happy

Okay, hello and welcome to episode 75 of question and answer. I am your host Panyobhasa and actually this is episode 75b because it happened again.

I did the entire Q&A yesterday, took a little over a half hour and a half and then I mean it's like the timer's going, you see how how many minutes it's been that the thing's been running and then after I'm done, I check and it's blank. It didn't record again.

So, three strikes and Apple Photo Booth is out.

And so, I can now say to hell with Apple Photo Booth cuz I have downloaded OBS

Studio which I sincerely hope will work
at least as well.

Preferably much better.

So, at least we had like a dress
rehearsal yesterday

of answering these questions so I don't
have as much of an excuse for flubbing
the questions this time. And this should
be the last time
that it doesn't record when after I push
record and it says it's recording.

So,

with that out of the way, with that off
my chest if you will,

we're going to go with OBS Studio today
and I'm going to start answering
questions. So, here we go. Let us begin.

The first question is from John.

And John says,

"Can you help me better understand the monk's rule of not lighting a fire? It's Pacittiya rule number 56 from the Bhikkhu Pātimokkha."

And he's got the Pāli here which I will recite with a Burmese accent or rather with an American accent superimposed onto a Burmese accent.

And it goes, "Yo pana bhikkhu aggilāno viññāpetvā pacchā joteti samādahāti vā samādahāpeti vā aññatra tāru Pacittiyam."

So, my my glasses are kind of blurry.

Maybe I should wipe them.

Anyways, what that means is that
give it a loose translation here.

And furthermore, whatever monk, not
being sick, lights a fire or causes a
fire to be lit for the purpose of
warming himself,

unless it's for some other reason, he
commits a pacitti offense, which is an
offense of

uh expiation. It's a medium severity
offense

um that you can expiate just through
making confession.

So, yo pana beku agi lanu it be na pac
ko zotim tamada hia wa tamada happy a wa
nyatra da taru pap

pisiya pacittiyam. And then uh John here

continues, after quoting the Pali,
"Not to light a fire or have a fire lit
except then for lighting candle, oil
lamp, etc., cooking or reheating his
food." Well, actually, a monk isn't
allowed to cook food. He can reheat it,
but not cook it. "See, if a beku who is
not ill lights a fire or has a fire lit
for him, he commits a pacittiya.

Switching on a light or an electrical
appliance is not considered lighting a
fire. If a beku lights or revives a
fire, voluntarily blows on a lit fire to
rekindle it, adds anything to the fire
like a log or paper, etc., or asks
another person to light, maintain, or

rekindle a fire,

he commits the pacittiya number 56.

Would a monk not be allowed to start a fire in order to stay warm in cold weather?"

Okay.

So,

according to the origin story of this rule, some monks lit a fire to stay warm, and they were, I guess, the implication is they were kind of wimpy monks because it really doesn't get extremely cold in the Ganges Valley in India.

But anyway, they lit this fire. They had this fire going and a big black snake that was like inside of a hollow log

that they put on the fire came out and was chasing them around and it caused an uproar. And so

um the Buddha made this rule that you're not allowed to make a fire to warm yourself unless you are sick.

So I mean the So the implication is the main reason against this rule is it is to prevent small creatures that live on wood from being burned alive.

And there are quite a few rules that that are along these lines where a monk is forbidden to do something like dig the ground or use water that he thinks might contain living creatures, you know, like for bathing or whatever, like

pouring it onto the ground causing the
whatever creatures are in there to die.

Um there's lots of rules. Well,
several rules along those lines and this
is one of them.

Um

So I guess the thing is with regard to
this rule, one of the reasons why it was
made is that it just doesn't get that
cold in the Ganges Valley. It gets down
to maybe freezing or at least it did in
the Buddha's time. You know, there was
like eight days of frost
in the Buddha's time in in the Ganges
Valley.

And

So according to the ancient text, the

Buddha made the rule about a monk having three robes, you know, an inner robe, an outer robe, and a lower robe. And the outer robe can be two layers thick. If it's new cloth, it can be four layers thick if it's old cloth.

Um

And uh also a monk is allowed to wear a kind of felt blanket called a pawara.

I think that's what it's called.

Pu water.

Anyway.

So, I mean, having a fire to keep warm just wasn't necessary in those days. And so, it was considered to be just a sign of luxury or wimpiness or something

unless you were sick.

But, the thing is, in the temperate zone where it gets well below freezing in the wintertime, if you've got hypothermia, that would count as being sick. I mean, if you're going to die or are in danger of dying or getting frostbite or whatever, then that would be a legitimate excuse for building a fire to warm yourself.

Um when I was a junior monk and very strict, I was sort of agitating at the monastery. They were They were like setting up meditation cabins. And I was saying, you know,

"Use electric heaters. Don't use like kerosene heaters or natural gas heaters

just because strict monks might not want to use actual fire to warm themselves in what I considered to be against the rules."

But, uh really

because I mean, they didn't have

kerosene heaters or um

like natural gas heaters in the Buddha's

time. And I mean, there are no animals,

no living creatures are endangered by by

using one of these as a general rule.

So, I mean, that's just sort of one of

these

ancient rules that maybe people might

adhere to too strictly and go beyond the

spirit of the rule simply because modern

technology has invented ways of warming yourself with fire without actually endangering small creatures or large snakes.

So, I guess I answered that one.

So, I'll just move on to the next question. This is Fred.

And Fred says, "I have seen a monk handle money in a plastic bag. What's your thoughts?"

Well, I mean, it's just as much against the rules for monk to handle money if it's in a plastic bag or like they do in Burma a lot of the time in a paper envelope. You know, they sort of discreetly conceal the money in an envelope and hand that to the monk. But,

I mean, they're just concealing the fact that the monk is breaking the rules because it doesn't matter whether it's in a plastic bag or an envelope. Monks are not allowed to accept money or handle money except under very limited circumstances and it's never their own money that they're allowed to handle. So, like if a monk finds a purse or a wallet lying on the ground inside the monastery, it is his duty to pick it up and put it somewhere safe so that when the person comes back for it, it can be given to them. But, if he finds the wallet or the purse right outside the monastery, he's not allowed to touch it.

It's only if it's inside the monastery property. Or also, there's another one that I've never heard of actually happening although it's described in the texts, where if a monk forfeits his money because money for a monk to handle money is called Nissaggiya Pacittiya. So, it's like Pacittiya like the rule against building a fire to warm yourself unless you're sick.

But, Nissaggiya means with forfeiture, which means you have to forfeit whatever is causing you to break the rule before you can make confession because if you make confession without getting rid of the the money or whatever it is, then

the confession is invalid because you haven't you're still breaking the rule as you make confession.

I mean, you you break the rule like one moment after you made the confession just because you still have the money.

So,

in the in the texts and again, I've never heard of this actually happening, um the monk will forfeit his money to the Sangha and then the Sangha will appoint somebody to take that money and just go out into the woods and just fling it on the ground somewhere.

But, again,

uh I've never heard of a monk that

handled money actually going through the trouble of officially forfeiting it because they just don't want to get rid of their money.

So,

yeah, so I guess I answered that question. It's it's just against the rules.

I'm not exactly in the center of the picture here, which disturbs my OCD slightly.

Okay, so I'll just move on to Fred's next question, which is is Om the universal frequency?

And that's what the Upanishads say. You know, some Hindu tradition says that Om

is the universal frequency, although I'm not so sure that there is a universal frequency. I mean, you can say that sort of the background noise of the universe, which

it used to be, I don't know if it still is, but used to be considered evidence of the Big Bang. It was still like the aftershocks, you know, the reverberations of the Big Bang can still be detected in space.

But, I guess the Big Bang might be uh becoming an obsolete theory or something because a lot of a lot of uh astrophysicists are kind of not liking the idea much anymore.

So, whether Om is the universal frequency, I don't think so. It is a good frequency for um raising consciousness, I guess. You're just kind of tapping in to this vibe that has been going for centuries by all these swamis and yogis and adept meditators who are doing Om. I remember uh um Ram Dass in one of his books said that he was doing a certain mantra, a simple uh Hindu mantra in India, and he just all of a sudden it was like the Mormon Tabernacle Choir was all around him doing this mantra.

And he went to one of his teachers and he said, "Well, you you've tapped into that that frequency of all these people

over the centuries reciting this mantra,
and it's you know, you just sort of
blended it in with it.

But it's uh

Yeah, it's more of a human psychological
thing, I think, than an actual universal
frequency.

So, I think I'll just move on to Fred's
next question,

which is, are zombies a dead end?

And that's actually a myth. It's It's
just a common misperception that zombies
are a dead end because in fact they are
undead.

They are an undead end.

So, I'll just move on to the next

question here. This is from Powers.

And I'm just going to check to make sure it's recording. Yep, it says it's recording.

And I trust this one.

So, Powers says, of the four brahma vihara, which do you think is the most important to practice? And for those of you who are innocent of poly technology or poly technical terms, I almost said poly technology.

For those of you who really don't know the the Buddhist jargon, the brahma viharas are four of them. It means something like the divine abodes.

And it's

um

four attitudes toward others, really,
that are a kind of meditation object.

And you've got metta, which is usually
translated as loving kindness.

I think uh more literally be something
like friendliness.

You got loving metta or loving kindness.

You've got karuna or compassion, which
is sort of sympathizing with other
people's
suffering.

Then you've got mudita or some kind
sometimes it's translated as sympathetic
joy, which is kind of the converse of of
compassion, where you are rejoicing in

other people's joy.

And then you've got upekkha or equanimity.

And of the four brahma viharas, the only one that I have heard of that gets practiced regularly, that that you can go to a meditation retreat and the the teacher there will be leading you through a guided metta meditation is metta. I mean, it's

I've never heard of like going to a monastery. I'm sure it does happen sometimes, but you go to a meditation retreat or a meditation center and they're guiding you through karuna or through mudita or through upekkha. It's almost always metta.

So, finding a good teacher who's experienced in any of the other three is going to be a little bit tricky. You know, finding even a book that gives clear instructions on how to do the other three other than metta, uh it might be a little bit difficult, but metta meditation is very common. A lot of people a lot of Theravada Buddhists practice it.

Um but on the other hand, I mean, just just based on that, metta meditation would be the most convenient and probably the easiest to practice where you can get actual benefit from it just because there are experienced teachers,

people who have practiced it for years and years who can give you instruction on how to do it correctly.

But on the other hand, according to the Visuddhimagga, which is like the hub, the central text of the Theravada Buddhist commentarial tradition, it does state that only one of the Brahma Viharas, if you meditate on it, will take you all the way to fourth jhana, and that is upekkha or equanimity.

I think metta will only get you to the third jhana or something like that.

So, upekkha will get you farther if you can find out how to do upekkha meditation correctly, find a skilled

teacher who's actually practiced it correctly.

But, um all in all, metta meditation is the main one that people practice, so it's easier to get instructions on it and easier to just go to a meditation retreat where you practice it.

So,

which is the most important to practice?

It depends on what your priorities are.

If If you can find out how to do Upekkha meditation correctly, then maybe that one would be most important because it's a more advanced meditative object. You know, it gets you farther in meditation.

But, Metta is very useful. You know,

it's good to be able to beam love at the
at the entire universe,
including your enemies.

So, yeah, it depends on
your priorities to determine which one
is more important to practice. So, we'll
just move on to the next question from
Powers, which is, "Are you available for
in-person interviews?" Well, I have done
interviews like on Skype with people
before.

So, I mean, it's been a while since I've
done it, but I have done it and it can
be done.

But, um you'll have to search around for
some way of contacting me because I'm
not going to put my contact information

right here

because, uh

you know, the wrong people might start contacting me.

And by the wrong people, I mean people who are not in good faith. You know, people who are, you know, malicious or something.

Or just nutty people who you you'd rather have them not stalking you or something.

So, I think I'll just move on to the next question here. This is from Sanguine Ultima.

And Sanguine Ultima says,

"How would a person whose entire sense

of self is built on self-loathing,
Weltschmerz, which means world sadness,
and negative mind states begin to detach
from their addiction to suffering?"

Well,

first of all, I would say that I really
can't give a lot of advice based on my
own experience because I mean I have
gone through pessimistic phases. I've
been through depressed phases in my
life.

Um you know, when especially when I was
a younger fellow,

um you know, I had kind of a loathing
for for the world which helped me to
renounce the world. You know, I just did
not have a high opinion of the human

race. I preferred the company of trees to the company of people.

Um

So, I mean I can't really speak um based on my own experience how to overcome, you know, a person whose entire sense of self is built on self-loathing.

You know, I've never really loathed myself other than maybe twinges of it after you do something really foolish or stupid, especially when I was younger.

Like uh when I was a kid, I stole something from a store. I shoplifted and my mother found out and she started crying. And I just It was like I felt like this big. I just wanted to sink

into the floor. I was like 13 years old at the time.

But uh yeah, not as like a prominent personality trait. It's not really a prominent personality trait in my case. But I could give some advice.

Like for example,

um the Visuddhimagga, which I already mentioned, it does say that people who have the dosa temperament or the aversion temperament are actually They actually have an advantage in practicing Dhamma because if you have aversion for the world or aversion even for yourself, it makes you easier to detach. Makes it easier for you to renounce.

So, I mean you can use it in that sense

as a kind of benefit.

Although I mean if it's really extreme,
then

um you're just going to have to power
through it. Like um

I mean it's like

you have these negative mental states
and eventually it would have to lead you
to like a crisis point where you just
plainly see, you know, it just strikes
you with this realization

that it's not benefiting you and that I
mean, it's just not a good way of
dealing with your situation. And so, I
mean, once you hit this crisis stage,
then it can just

slam you out of your rut.

And that happens a lot. Like Eckhart Tolle apparently was like borderline suicidal for years. I mean, he was just depressed and just loathed the world. I don't know if he loathed himself or not. Maybe he did.

Um

and then it just got so bad. It hit he hit this crisis and it just slammed him into a

higher state of consciousness, at least according to his own testimony.

So, those would be your two best bets with regard to having a very negative attitude towards the world and towards yourself and trying to overcome that is

one you can use it as a kind of tool to help you to just detach and renounce.

Um and also, on the other hand, if if you can't really use it for that very well, then I mean, really you're just going to have to just keep going further into it until finally you just have enough insight that it can liberate you from from this attitude.

That you just hit the crisis point where you just it's just obviously not working anymore. And so, then, you know, it just kind of it causes a kind of um almost like a mental collapse. You know, it's it's a collapse of this

structure, this these habitual perceptions that you've got. Once they can no longer cope with your situation anymore, it's just like an instinct in humans and even in dogs that I mean you're just like a slave to your habits until the habits just break down because they just cannot cope with the situation anymore. And then uh you become very open to suggestion. You can and then you can move beyond that.

So, I mean that's the best advice I can give you and the first advice is good advice. I mean it's it's sort of like, you know, good news. And the second advice that you may have to just like

keep going until you have some kind of
breakdown because
the the attitude just is not serving you
very well.

Then I mean it's it's kind of bad news,
but I mean it's good at the end. Like
Ram Dass, I'm always talking about Ram
Dass. He was like my first spiritual
teacher just via books.

And he was saying that uh like absolute
despair is a prerequisite to significant
spiritual
growth.

Because you have to hit the the despair,
the crisis point in order to let go of
the old habits and reach out for

something better.

So, with all due respect to Sanguine Altima, I'm going to move on to the next question, which is from Joe Doe.

And Joe Doe says, "I have heard that the swastika is used as a meditation tool.

They say that good meditators can focus on the symbol and visualize it spinning.

Have you ever heard this?" Well, the swastika is a Buddhist symbol. It's like an ancient Indian symbol. The word swastika is Sanskrit. It means something like good benefit or good welfare.

And it was essentially like a good luck symbol.

And uh I mean the Buddhist swastika bends the opposite way from the the

German National Socialist

uh swastika, the Hakenkreuz, but they took it from from India.

And used it as kind of uh Aryan propaganda in a way.

And it's really not used as a meditation object in Theravada Buddhism.

In Tibetan Buddhism they use mandalas.

Which is you know kind of like a diagram that they like can focus on that and it may be that they have to they visualize the mandala and maybe cause it to spin or expand and contract. In Theravada Buddhism they've got what are called kasinas which are much more simple.

They're not mandalas. It's usually just a colored disc and you're supposed to be able to visualize that in your mind, see it clearly in your mind even with your eyes closed and be able to expand it and contract it and so forth.

But

they don't use mandalas

um

or swastikas. I assume I have seen mandalas that were kind of swastika shaped. You know it's had kind of a swastika in it but it was more ornate than ordinary swastika.

And again Tibetan Buddhists may use it as a meditation object but it's not used in Theravada.

So

I guess I answered that question so I'll just move on to the next question which is from Rui.

And Rui says do you consider the

expression sentient being a pleonasm?

Would you designate a table for instance

as a non-sentient being or as a mere

entity or thing? I know the etymological

intricacies of being are luxuriant but

what would your off-the-cuff view be?

Well, let's see here.

First of all I guess I should um define

pleonasm. Which are you know two words

that are together that essentially say

the same thing. You know sort of like a

tautological statement and then I might have to define tautological too so I'm just going down a rabbit hole here.

But pleonasm you know it's just unnecessarily saying the same thing in two different ways.

So,

do I consider the expression sentient being a pleonasm? Not necessarily. I mean, I don't consider a table, for for example, to be a being. I mean, um maybe it's just because I have a degree in biology, but I would consider a being to be an organism, you know, some sort of living thing. And so, and sentient, on the other hand, it would have to have some kind of mental image,

like perceptions and volitions. There'd have to be like a mental image there.

So, I would say like a plant, for example, might be a non-sentient being.

You know, it's an organism, and it may have a very simple, primitive kind of consciousness, but it doesn't in in all likelihood, it doesn't think. It doesn't have like mental images.

You know, it's just like this very primitive, primordial kind of consciousness with not much content to it.

Um in in Theravada Buddhism, plants are called ekin ekin triya jiva, which means one faculty life. They have the faculty

of touch, and that's it. They can't see, they can't hear, they can't smell, they can't taste, but they and they can't think, but they can they can experience touch.

And I don't think that would be sufficient for my

um

in in for me to classify them as sentient.

I think a sentient being would have to have some kind of mental image. They'd have to have some kind of mental world, you know, or um

just like mental images, perceptions, and volitions.

That would be my off-the-cuff view.

But a table, I don't consider to be any kind of being, and really, it's only an entity or a thing

um based on

perception. It's an artifact of perception.

So, let's move on to Rui's next question here,

which is, "Would you like to expand a bit on memory of past lives in early childhood?

In my own experience being drawn to certain things and situations around age four or five entailed a strong sense of familiarity."

Well,

I don't have any past life memories from childhood.

Like some little kids they know they'll talk about, you know, "When I was a man, you know, and in fact my my own little brother used to talk about that." You he'd tell my dad about what he used to do when he was a man.

And my father believed in reincarnation, so he took it seriously and was trying to get more information from him, but it was relatively vague since it was coming from like a three or four-year-old.

Um

but um

let's see. Where where do I go with this? Could I expand a bit on memory of

past lives in early childhood?

Um

yeah, I'm as I already said, I really don't have any memories of past lives in early childhood or even in adulthood.

Personally, I have like maybe educated guesses or intuitions about past lives that I have lived based on just like a fascination or a a resonance with certain times in history, certain cultures like medieval Japan, 14th century England, like the late Roman Republic in southern Italy, that kind of thing.

And it could not really easily be explained through genetics and past

experience.

So, that some sort of past life momentum carrying over into this life may account for that.

But um if you want to know more about memories of past lives in early childhood, I would recommend reading books of from Dr. Evans Ian Stevenson who I think he he was on the faculty of the University of Virginia or something like that. And he wrote a number of books about young children who remembered their past lives as a kind of um

it's indicative or suggestive of reincarnation.

And it's it's really interesting. Some

of the stories are fascinating.

So, I mean that would be I would sort of steer you towards that. Read books by Dr. Ian Stevenson on, you know, children who remember past lives. Also, he was doing a study on uh

um like children who are born with birthmarks, weird birthmarks. And sometimes children who remember their past lives,

um

you know, they'll have these birthmarks that were like like karmic carryovers from the previous life. You know, they might have like a big birthmark on their neck and it was like, you know, they got

their their

you know, they died from having their
their throat cut or something. Or, you
know, they died in a car crash and
they've got like this birthmark showing,
you know, where the injury was or
something.

So,

uh I was going to say something that was
good and then it just it just went by.

Uh

Oh, yeah. I remember what I was going to
say now. That children who remember past
lives, it's it's more likely to happen
if the previous life was just cut off
suddenly through like an accident or
murder or something. If they just faded

out, they're much less likely to remember their past life, you know, in the subsequent one. But if if they're just cut off in just full full spate of the the momentum of their their karma, then uh

it's like it's more likely to carry over into the next into the next life, at least for the first few years, when until finally they just kind of identify with this new life and just kind of forget the past stuff or just you know, just you know, they're maybe they're just very much discouraged from talking about it when they're little kids cuz it creeps out their parents or something.

And so they just kind of it just gets submerged.

But yeah, read Dr. Ian Stevenson about that. It's it's really some of the stories are really interesting where he'd be, you know, finding children who remembered past lives and like, you know, asking them and then trying to verify, you know, by, you know, contacting, you know, he the kid says he was born in such and such a neighborhood and he he ran a pharmacy or something and so, um you know, Dr. Ian Stevenson would go and investigate to see how well that the kids' stories match up with with uh the actual history of, you know, the person

they said that they used to be.

And it worked it was more scientifically
convincing if the child hadn't really
had any

uh contact with the other family at

Sometimes the contact had already

happened so that it was it wasn't nearly
as good of evidence because, you know,
they might have coached the kid on what
stories to tell or whatever.

So,

um yeah, I guess I guess I've answered
that question.

So, I'll just move on to the next
question. This is from DoomTube.

And DoomTube says,

"I heard somewhere along the way that keeping a straight back during meditation was somehow important because of the alignment of the so-called chakras. If the chakras are not an objective reality as you as opposed to a subjective concept, why do you suggest sitting in the lotus position as opposed to in a chair or laying down, for example?"

Well, yeah, I'm sure the yoga people would give some explanation with regard something along the lines of you know, it's keeping your chakras aligned, you know, in a perfectly perpendicular like a vertical ascent kind of a thing. But um from my point of view, if we just

set aside chakras, which really are not
a Theravada Buddhist concept,
then um I've got two hypotheses that
could account for how sitting in the
full lotus

um optimizes meditation. And I know from
my own experience, at least my own
personal experience, if you sit in the
full lotus, your meditation's going to
improve by 3% or 5%. There's going to be
a noticeable improvement in your
meditation just from sitting in the full
lotus.

And it may not have anything to do with
alignment of chakras. It may just be
that it's easier to sit straight up and

down like a totally, you know,
perpendicular to the floor posture,
ramrod straight, if you're in the full
lotus. It kind of automatically tilts
your pelvis forward a bit, which helps
you to keep your back straight.

And um just being in an alert posture
helps you to be alert just like if
you're in a slumped-over, sleepy-looking
posture, it helps you to be sleepy.

That they've actually done psychological
studies on this where you adopt a
certain posture and your mind just kind
of falls along with the posture. So if
you're sitting like very alert, very
just straight up and down, it's more
likely to help you be alert, which is

helpful in meditation. It helps you to be more fully conscious when you're meditating. And another hypothesis that I came up with is that when you're sitting in the full lotus, your legs are just kind of tied up like a a pretzel, you know, almost like a they're tied in a knot.

And that may reduce blood flow to your legs, which may then increase blood flow to the rest of your body, which would include your your brain.

So that will also might, you know, increase oxygen flow to your brain or something and help you to be more alert and conscious and thereby help your

meditation.

So, it's not necessarily caused by aligning your chakras, but I do know from my own experience sitting in the full lotus will improve your meditation if you can do it without agony.

So, I'll just move on to Doom Tube's next question here

which is, if ultimately the material objective experience is in essence delusionary, what difference would it make by keeping the back vertically vertically aligned whilst meditating?

Well, I mean, you are part of the delusion and so

um I mean, it makes a difference so long as you're identified with the body.

Uh it's it's hard to explain this kind of question or answer this kind of question cuz it's dealing with two levels of reality at the same time.

But really all that we are is a kind of delusion.

You know, it's it's like you've got let's say you've got infinite consciousness

and some of this infinite consciousness which contains all possibilities

contains I mean, it's

it contains the possibility um the consciousness becoming a recursive,

becoming aware of itself. It becomes so complicated it becomes aware of itself

and then starts believing that it's
separate from everything else
which is
delusional or ignorant.

And so, so long as this
falsely isolated
pocket of delusion really thinks that
it's real, then it's pretty much
enslaved itself to what it considers to
be real. And
um I mean, I've gone through phases when
I was a monk
where it just it just seemed to me like
it didn't even matter whether I went to
heaven or hell
because, you know, ultimately it just
doesn't matter.

But so long as you're delusional, so long as you're not enlightened yet, it it does matter. I mean there is obviously a difference between going to heaven or and going to hell.

So,

I mean if you can really just be completely detached from, you know, happiness or unhappiness or progress or retrogression or whatever, then you'd probably be enlightened anyway. Or either that or just completely apathetic.

So,

yeah, I mean so long as you're in the delusion, then it does matter even

though ultimately it doesn't.

But,

I mean so long as you're invested in it and believe that it's real, then you're better off with a positive reality than a negative one or with, you know, a positive a reality that takes you closer to the actual reality instead of a false reality that's taking you farther away and making you more asleep or more delusional.

And again, it's hard to answer questions like that because you have to be dealing with two levels of reality simultaneously, like ultimate truth and conventional truth.

And it's tricky.

So, I'm just going to move on to the next question. This is from Indian guy who also goes by the alias of Trevor.

And Trevor or Indian guy says, "Did the Buddha eat poop?"

I swear I heard in a sutta that he ate poop during his ascetic days." And yeah, it's there's one sutta at least, which is the Maha Sihanada sutta, the great discourse of the lion's roar in the Majjhima Nikaya. I think maybe it's sutta number 12 in the Majjhima Nikaya. Don't quote me on that.

But, um yeah, a large part of that sutta is the Buddha just bragging in grandiose terms about he out asceticed every other

ascetic. And that included eating cow
poop. It also included just wandering
around naked

like Mahavira did. Or and it also
included he he wore some kind of
clothing made out of owl wings.

Because apparently in ancient India some
ascetics wore owl wings. I assume it
wouldn't be like a full suit of clothes
made out of owl wings. I'm I'm sure it's
owl wings are kind of hard to come by. I
mean how are you going to how are you
going to find these owl wings?

So

it might just be like a little loincloth
thing. Just a few wings just to cover
the naughty bits.

But uh yeah, I think it was it was cow
poop that he ate.

Um

it may be somewhere that he ate his own.

This it just because it's like an
ancient Indian ascetic thing that you
just kind of recycle it. You
you need less food if you just pass it
through more than once sort of like
rabbits do. But the thing is
um I'm kind of skeptical of these kind
of accounts. Not because I don't think
that nobody did it. But I I'm skeptical
that the Buddha would sit there just
bragging and bragging about how
you know how unsurpassed he was with

regard to even the ascetic stuff that didn't cause him to become enlightened. He still out-asceticed all the other ascetics. You know he's he's bragging about how he eat like one bean every two weeks. That kind of thing. You know that was like his diet.

And I mean I don't doubt that he did do severe austerities before he turned to the right kind of meditation and became enlightened. You know some of the stuff in in the text where he's talking about the Dukkara Cariya or this this period of you know six years of ascetic practice where he became so emaciated that if he touched his belly he could feel his spine.

And if he if he rubbed his arms, the hairs would just break off due to the the malnutrition that he was experiencing.

Um yeah, I I mean that kind of stuff, it seems plausible, but to have him do all of these extremely extreme uh ascetic practices that

yeah, I mean like one bean every 2 weeks, I don't think that's even possible really.

Or I don't know. It's It's more It's it's not so much a matter of the Buddha really having done this, but it does give uh an indication of what kind of ascetic practices were actually being

practiced in the Ganges Valley in the Buddha's time.

So,

it does say in the text at the very least that the that the Buddha, before he was the Buddha, you know, it it was before he became enlightened, he was doing all the standard Indian ascetic stuff that was in spiritual fashion at the time, and that included eating cow dung.

Just as a way of getting food that um you know, you're not having to beg for it. It's just lying there on the ground. It's easy to get. It's It's not tasty, so it's really ascetic, you know, it's just very austere in an extreme

way.

And I'd probably get worms and stuff really easy if you try that. I would not suggest people try this at home.

So, yeah, I mean it does say in the Mahasihanada Sutta at least that before he became enlightened, when he was doing the extreme austerities, that he did eat cow dung as part of his ascetic practice.

And uh I mean even today in Burma, uh some monks will drink cow pee just as a kind of medicine, like stale cow urine. And you can take these things called emblic myrobalans. I've actually tried this before. They're They're sort

of like gooseberries. They're very astringent and green, but if you put them in the cowpea, they turn black like black olives and they taste like black olives and it's kind of medicinal.

But that's that's totally different and I'm digressing. So, I'm just going to move on to the next question here, which is from Liberland.

And this is a strange question and I do not fully understand it, which is kind of par for the course with Liberland's very cerebral questions.

So, anyway, Liberland says,

"Given that there aren't many spare examples of attainment of omniscience or diminishing of karma such that only

subtle passions remain,
would you consider it arguable that you
are a working model of these things such
that if someone were searching for an
example of omniscience in regard to the
workings of karma, they could seek to
emulate you in some regard? And as added
detail, let's imagine that this scale of
intuition goes from someone who doesn't
have any cause for believing in karma to
one that has strong samvega because of
the insights they have into Buddha
Dharma. So, even philosophical
recognition of it being a real substance
is contributive to some amount of
omniscience and subtlety of the passions

being based in a change from past baseline.

Basically, just not viewing these as supernatural attainments, but instead factors of everyday wisdom like cultivating samvega. I mean, you had the determination to become a seriously practicing monk after all.

So, I really I mean, this kind of the main part of the question is up at the top here.

In that it's kind of like a two-pronged question here.

It's like

Let's see here. Would you consider it arguable that you are a working model of these things, which is omniscience and

the diminishing of karma such that only subtle passions remain. And that's like two different things. And really um I don't consider myself to be omniscient.

You know, I do

not know certain things.

And uh with regard to the diminishing of karma such that only subtle passions remain.

Well, I mean, I was a strictly practicing monk for many years.

For approximately 30 years.

And I mean, if if that counts for anything, if 30 years of yogic practice, intensive yogic practice counts for anything, then

yeah, I'd I'd say it's likely that I'm further along than most people.

But uh

uh I'm not so sure that um my karma is so diminished that only subtle passions remain. I mean, I can still get irritated or annoyed. Sometimes at work, um not at other people so much as just, you know, it's something is coming out crooked through out of the machine or something, or on in traffic, you know, you can you can like cuss people just cuz they're behaving like idiots, or you perceive them as behaving like idiots. Also, any any man that's got a woman, women just instinctively know how to push a guy's

buttons when they want to. And it hasn't happened in a while, but bless her heart, she she has pushed my buttons more than once.

So,

with regard to omniscient,

um it it does remind me. There's a

uh a statement in the Tibetan Book of the Great Liberation,

um which is a Tibetan text, of course.

It's not It's not Theravada Buddhism,

but it's referring to the one mind,

which is sort of like Brahman for the

for the Vedantists. You know, it's just this

consciousness that pervades the

universe.

And the Tibetan Book of the Great Liberation says, "It is not a multiplicity and is omniscient."

And I assume that would be the kind of omniscience that the Buddha attained is that

he didn't really attain it. I mean, it was always there. It was just permeates everything. It's just that he got rid of all the delusion stuff and there it was and it was always there and then he had access to it.

Um and so the more you practice, the more you're going to be thinning the veil and and have gradually more access to this you know universal omniscience.

Just everything is there.

At least in potential form.

But I don't think that uh

now the Buddha's omniscience

necessarily meant that he could speak

Mandarin Chinese or do integral calculus

long before it was invented or anything

like that.

So

yeah, I I don't think that it would be

good for people to

find to see me as an example of

omniscience or even necessarily of

attenuating karma until only subtle

passions remain.

They could see me as someone who's moved

in that direction, I suppose.

But like someone who has attained uh omniscience, I would be more likely to like if I had to guess someone in the past 100 years who had attained omniscience, I might guess Neem Karoli Baba up on the the bookshelf back there. Cuz he had some really amazing psychic abilities.

Um

but I think I guess there's like another part that the added detail which is more complicated and harder to understand than the original question here.

Let's imagine the scale of intuition goes from someone who doesn't have any cause for believing in karma to one that

has strong some wiggle because of the insights they have into Buddha Dharma so even philosophical recognition of it being a real substances contributed to some amount of omniscient and subtly of the passions being based in a change from past baseline. Basically just not viewing these as supernatural attainments but instead factors of everyday wisdom like cultivating some wega.

Um

Yeah, I mean technically according to Theravada Buddhism there really is nothing supernatural. That nothing is supernatural. It's just like you know

you you reach a certain level and you
unlock new skills like in a video game.
And that's that's just in accordance
with the way of of nature. It's just the
the natural way of things.

So

Yeah, I mean there really are no
supernatural attainments. I mean even
like psychic abilities and so forth.

Um it's it's not really supernatural.

It's just that you have to reach a
certain level before you get access to
them.

So

I hope I answered that question.

But uh

I would not encourage people to consider

me to be omniscient.

Like if I was really omniscient I would have known yesterday that even though it said it was recording it wasn't really recording. So I wouldn't have to sit through this twice. Not that I'm exactly complaining. I'm not complaining about having to answer you guys' questions twice.

Anyways, I'm just going to move on to Libra Lamb's next next question here.

Which is Ajahn Chah reportedly stated that one will attain stream entry in less than six months of practice if they are really trying. Do you consider this

sensible if we think about it as
reformatting one's karma from an anima
naturaliter Christian naturally
Christian soul to an anima naturaliter
Buddhistic.

So yeah,

Libra Lamb asks cerebral questions as I
as I mentioned just a little while ago.

Um,

it does say in the Satipatthana Sutta
that if you practice for just one week,
just solid intensive Satipatthana
practice, that uh you not only become a
sotapanna, but you'll either become
enlightened or an anagami.

But uh

I guess most people just aren't capable

of just non-stop

full blast mindfulness for a week

straight cuz it doesn't happen very
often.

So,

with regard to stream entry, I've I've
mentioned on numerous occasions that I'm
rather skeptical of stream entry
originally having meant some kind of
uh higher attainment. That it originally
probably meant something like being born
again, you know, you've you've entered
you've you've like converted to Buddhism
and you you're like sincerely trying to
be a good Buddhist and that that causes
you make merit, you know, through your

your generosity and your your morality
and just your your dedication to Dhamma
that you're you're not likely to
retrogress or go to hell after you die
or be born as an animal or hungry ghost
or whatever after you die.

And so,

um I can relate to what a lot of Burmese
say autos talk about. I think in the
Mahasi tradition they talk about the the
chula sotapanna or like the minor
sotapanna. It's not like you're really a
complete sotapanna, but it's like I was
just describing where you're even though
you haven't had any glimpse of nirvana
yet, you know, you haven't attained a
superhuman mental states yet, still

you're so well established in practicing
Dhamma and, you know, keeping precepts
and and being generous to the poor, and,
you know, it's like
you're you're not going to go to hell,
you know, you're pretty much guaranteed
of getting, you know, a better life
after you die just because you're doing
so well as a Buddhist, you know, such a
sincere sincerely practicing Buddhist
that that you're
protected from going to hell or that
sort of thing.

So,

um

yeah, I think that that

um

is likely. Although,

um like to become a to like have a

glimpse of nibbana within 6 months if

you're like anybody should get a glimpse

of nibbana within 6 months if they're

really trying. I don't think so because

most people just aren't ripe for it yet.

Even people that are trying sincerely,

they just don't have the parami

or the just the the karmic momentum or

just the the wisdom

to actually succeed in that. Like like

not everybody is going to become a

concert pianist. Not everybody even has

the potential become a concert pianist

or like a an Olympic gold medalist or a

Nobel Prize winning mathematician. Not everybody can do that even though they might be trying as hard as they can.

They're just not ready for that yet.

They don't have the innate talent for that. And I think it's probably true with regard to people becoming enlightened, too.

I mean, you have to you have to be ripe for it.

So, with regard to getting a glimpse of nibbana within 6 months,

um

yeah, I mean, I was pretty naive when I first became a monk. I was planning on getting jhana within the first 6 months.

And I didn't fully realize how I'm just naturally not a good meditator and it took years and years and years before I could really get into deep meditative states.

And uh

yeah, so I'm not exactly sure what Ajahn Chah was referring to when he I what his definition of a sotapanna would be.

Um

but like a true little sotapanna, maybe,

but like a real technical

ariya,

I'm not so sure.

So, we'll just move on to uh Libra

Lamb's third and last question here. And

I do commend everybody for having

limited their questions to three, which does seem to be working fairly well, cuz we've just got uh like a moderate manageable number of questions this time.

So, anyways, Libra Lamb says, "Could we talk about a glimpse of nibbana as something that would only apply to the spirit of a born-again Buddhist in the sense that it is a high and subtle attainment." And he's got born-again Buddhist in quotes.

And no, I don't I don't think that Theravada Buddhism has a monopoly on glimpses of nibbana. I think that

Hindus, like can name Kalu Rinpoche back there, very likely have had glimpses of nibbana. I think possibly even some Christian contemplatives, like Saint John of the Cross, may have had glimpses of nibbana. Who knows? Sufis, who knows?

You know, it could even be like Stone Age shamans in prehistoric times had glimpses of nibbana just because they were ripe for it.

a result of deliberate practice. I mean, some people have a near-death experience that is just transcendent, you know, it just has this awakening effect on them. Like John Wren Lewis, for example, or

again, Eckhart Tolle had a similar situation.

So,

uh yeah, I I would say a glimpse of nibbana is definitely a high and subtle attainment,

but I I think that only a Buddhist would be able to attain that.

So, I'll just move on to the next question. This is from Toronto Nat.

And Toronto Nat says, "How should a young man who doesn't want to take monastic vows go about finding a decent wife?"

Well,

I'd say you got like two main options.

One is I mean, if you want like a a woman of the same race as you or the same culture as you, find as conservative of a girl as you can. You know, one who was brought up by, you know, conservative parents, has conservative values, doesn't necessarily keep her hair in braids, but still a woman that doesn't mess around. You know, she's just not been into the promiscuous sex thing, even though it's almost universal, it seems. You know, maybe she's a church-going Christian girl. Maybe she's Amish or something. Maybe she's a immigrant from Eastern Europe.

But, yeah, like body count definitely is a consideration for a guy. Like, if a woman's well up into double digits already,

you know, maybe she's only in her early 20s and is already well up into double digits, then it doesn't necessarily mean that she's got a bad personality or that she's a bad person, but it does suggest that just moving from man to man has become habitual.

And so, you're going to be a man that she's just going to move on to her next one after you just through force of habit at that point.

And it may be that there's some [__]

women out there who feel like they've just been slut-shamed, but as a general rule,

[__] women don't watch these videos, so I think we're okay.

Or your other option would be to get some

nice Southeast Asian Buddhist girl.

So, I mean, there's a lot of 30-year-old very sweet, very attractive old maid school teachers in Burma that would be thrilled to hook themselves an American or Western man cuz Western men just automatically have higher status than Burmese men in the eyes of Burmese women, it seems. Or at least in a lot of the eyes of a lot of

Burmese women. You know, it's just
America is considered to be the promised
land. It's almost It's like
paradise on Earth. Um maybe not so much
now that we have the the Biden
administration, but um back when I was
in Burma, it's
It's like
a lot of Burmese people just think that
America is like
like a heaven realm. Everyone is
beautiful and rich and happy. And if you
try to explain to them that that's not
necessarily the case, they might be very
skeptical of of that. They might just
persist in believing it even though

somebody who actually lived there for for many years is telling them otherwise.

So, yeah, that would be my two main guesses. You know, find yourself just a very conservative girl. You know, stay away from dating apps. Don't pick up chicks in bars. Don't try to meet the right girl in at a at a club or something.

Um

but I mean, find a girl with similar interests who has conservative values and is going to have conservative moral values because if she doesn't have conservative moral values, then

she might not be your woman for very
long just because
loyalty is out the window, it seems.

So,

I guess I guess that would be it. Find a
conservative white girl or a
conservative non-white girl.

At least conservative in their morality
regardless of their beliefs about
economics.

So, I'll just move on to Toronto now.

That's next question, which is, are
there any restrictions in the Sutta's
tradition or other sources that prohibit
race mixing?

So, is he prohibited from from hooking

up with the sweet 30-year-old old maid
school teacher in Burma?

And I don't think so. I'm Theravada
Buddhism is

surprisingly non-racist. I mean, there
was a caste system in India, which the
Buddha poked fun at a lot of the time.

You know, he pointed out that a person's
worth as a person depends on their own
personal characteristics,

rather than who their parents were, what
lineage they belong to, or what color

their skin is. So, he was teaching

similar things to what Dr. Martin Luther
King Jr. was saying, where a person

should be judged by their character, and
not by the color of their skin.

And the Sangha especially was non-racial
and non-classist

because the Sangha, you know, the the
ordained brotherhood of monks was
compared to the ocean. All these
different rivers flow in from different
directions, you know, different classes,
different ethnicities, and so forth, and
they all just blend together into one
ocean. And that's the way the Sangha was
with regard to different classes and
ethnicities, and so forth.

So, and I don't think that I
I'm unaware of there being any
prohibition on race mixing anywhere in
the Pali texts.

So,

I'll just move on to the next question here. This is WhiteAshPiper.

And WhiteAshPiper says, I was wondering in your 30 years as a Buddhist monk, if you'd ever seen another monk lay down and die.

I seen this on a YouTube video, where this monk with a handful of fellow monks walked into this room lit lied down to die. He looked healthy, certainly not old. There was no English sub subtitles.

Um so, other than being an observer in the dark, not much more info than he just died and was carried away. Well, I did see one Buddhist monk lie down and die, but he was bitten by a cobra.

So, I guess that one doesn't count.

Um I have read, like in Zen literature, about these Chinese masters back in during the the heyday of Chinese Zen or Chan Buddhism, where they would know in advance when they were going to die.

They actually send out invitations.

Everyone would come, they'd give one last sermon, and they'd lie down and die.

So, maybe they knew they had some kind of terminal illness that wasn't apparent to other people, or maybe they just had like this psychic, you know, prognosticative ability to see when they were going to die.

One way or the other.

So,

yeah, I've never heard about that in Theravada, although I assume it has happened. But I have read a number of cases of that with regard to Zen masters in in China long ago.

So, I guess it does happen, even though it's not a traditional Theravada Buddhist thing.

So, I'll just move on to the next question. This is from [__] Al Haram.

And [__] Al Haram says, "I have been struggling to grasp the second precept in the context of modern technology.

Evidently, one should abstain from robbing or stealing, but what about

pirating?

Often I have framed books I have found books online that are not in the public domain, and it may be assumed those books are not uploaded willingly by the author himself. Downloading them doesn't feel like outright stealing, but it does create some unease. What are your thoughts on this matter? My apologies if this has been answered already in one of your one of the Q&A's. Bless you. Yeah, actually I did answer this just a few Q&A's ago.

But may as well answer it again since uh that's this one kind of advantage of doing these Q&A's is that

the questions that people really ask the most get answered the most so to so to speak.

So, yeah, I was in I when I was asked this before

I was saying I mean so long as it's not illegal, I think you're doing okay. And then I got some comments in below the video saying that it's really not illegal. I mean you can't you can't be jailed for it. Somebody might try to sue you if you're like trying to especially if you're like downloading pirating something and then trying to sell it for for profit.

But um

you know, it does happen all the time. I

mean something similar happens at
libraries where you can just go and read
a book for free even though you didn't
pay for it. So the
the the author of the book, he gets the
the royalties at least
for the selling the book getting getting
sold to the library. But then 50 people
might read the same book and
then he's sort of
in a way he's kind of diddled out of the
uh
the royalties for that.

But I mean if you have any doubts at
all, you want to be pure, you know, you
want to be a a moral purist. If you've

got any doubts, then just don't do it.

But if you're not quite so pure and you're more of a pragmatist, then like with regard to stealing for a monk, I mean it has to be something I mean if he's going to be excommunicated for stealing or even commit an offense for stealing, then

it has to be something that he could be arrested for. It has to be really illegal.

So, I mean that would be really the line.

is is it illegal?

So, I mean again, I'm no authority on copyright law, anything like that.

But, I'm sure you could if you really

wanted to know the answer, you could
look into it.

And uh

But, again, if there's any doubt at all,
if you're not sure, and you want to be
pure,

then just avoid avoid it.

Avoid the situation that is that you
consider to be doubtful.

So, I'll just move on to the next
question here. This is from Hurdy Gurdy
Man.

And Hurdy Gurdy Man says,

"Could karma be described as a momentum
transcending conventional cause and
effect? This means that your past,

present, and future changes as one following your karma. Your karma moves you sideways through the infinite numbers of existences at an infinite rate."

Um

Karma You see, could it be described as a momentum transcending conventional cause and effect? Well, if conventional cause and effect is like materialistic, then I guess it could transcend that.

But,

I

I don't think your present changes. I don't think the present can change because, you know, it's right here, right now. And if it changes, it's I

mean, it's you've got moved to a different moment, and it's not now anymore.

So, now doesn't change. The future doesn't really change because it hasn't happened yet.

The past I mean, according to Theravada, the past can't change either, although um I think it could change if your perception of it changes in a sense.

Because it's not ultimately real anyway. So, if your perception of it changes, in a way that could change your past.

So, I mean, I've I've considered that with regard to my father. When he when he started getting really old, like in

his early 80s, some of the stories that he'd been telling since I was a kid started changing.

And I was

it was kind of a weird thing.

And so, I mean,

one of my theories about that is maybe

he was just becoming kind of loosened

from the standard route through his

karma that he had taken and is

remembering some alternate past.

Either that or, you know, it's just his

memory was failing.

But usually, it's the short-term memory

that fails rather than the long-term

memory. I mean, he could still recite

quotes from Shakespeare that he learned

in in school when he was a kid
when he was in his 80s.

So,

can karma be described as a momentum
transcending conventional cause and
effect?

I see karma, or just our path through
the universe, is sort of like an
imaginary path through like an infinite
maze of like imaginary events,
which is

kind of a surreal way of describing our
our situation in the world.

But, you know, it's infinite
possibilities in this universe,
and we are just sort of

tracing an imaginary path through these infinite possibilities.

And uh

I guess some possibilities are that the past can change just and the future can change, but

it's hard to say that your future can change when you haven't got there yet.

You know, it's just you just decided upon a different future,

but it's not that the future changed,

it's just that your path and your destination changed.

So,

yeah, it's it's it's hard to dis- talk about this is for the same reason as the other one that I was talking about a

little while ago, cuz you're dealing with two different levels of reality simultaneously.

And that's that's always kind of confusing. It's hard for the mind to grasp it, at least a human mind.

So,

um I mean, you could it could be described that way, but I mean, I would use different way of describing it just because my mind works differently. So, I'll just move on to Hurdy Gurdy Man's next question here, which is

"Would this also mean that every being exists in a state of pseudo solipsism?"

"While other beings exist as much or as

little as you do, you are the only consistent perspective. Every other being you see is really a stop motion effect of the many versions of this being passing you by." And actually, the the Yogacara Buddhists do believe in this kind of a pseudo solipsism. And solipsism means that you are the only reality, and that the entire world around you is just a figment of your imagination.

And yeah, Yogacara Buddhism, which is one of the two main philosophical branches of Mahayana, um yeah, they they say that, you know, your your karma is I mean, you're generating that. There's no physical matter, and so

you it's just like a mind-made virtual reality that you're living in. But as it turns out, the universe is infinite, as I've already been mentioning. It contains infinite possibilities. So, no matter what reality you choose, there's going to be plenty of other beings inhabiting that same like interpretation of reality sufficiently that you seem to be able to interact with each other.

That's more Yogacara than Theravada, though.

So,

also, Schopenhauer talked about that.

Just the weird I mean, he didn't

consider it to be like pseudo solipsism
so much as he considered it just to be
this inexplicable miracle that
everybody's karma just dovetails
perfectly. That the one person that you
want to punch in the nose is the one
person who has the karma to be punched
in the nose by you.

That everything is just perfectly
meshing. Everybody's karma just fits
perfectly.

And he considered just to be this
like essentially a miracle.

But

if you consider that the universe is
infinite with an infinite number of
possibilities, then no matter what route

you take, there's going to be a world
there that that you fit into perfectly.

So

in a way, yeah, it is a state of
pseudo-solipsism, I would guess. I would
say.

So I think I'll just move on to the next
question here. I'm not so sure that I'm
answering all these questions very well.

And uh

I've already answered them once before,
which uh is a further strike against my
uh

my reputation for being omniscient.

So the next question is from Pranav.

And Pranav says, "What's your opinion on

spirituality in modern times versus
Buddhist time?"

Well, yeah, there's definitely
differences in modern spirituality
versus the Buddhist spirituality. I
mean, spirituality in itself is the
same. I mean, Dharma
remains the same. It's just like a a
timeless truth.

But socially
you know, the way people were dealing
with spirituality was very different in
the Buddhist time than now. In the
Buddhist time, I mean, it was a time of
spiritual ferment.

You know, as people were very much uh
concerned with spirituality, much more

so than now. I mean, nowadays the mainstream is this spiritually bankrupt consumerism or hedonism.

So in the Buddhist time, there was that I mean, there was people who believed in their they believed in Dharma of some sort so unquestioningly that they were literally torturing themselves to death for the sake of liberation.

And yesterday on the first version of this Q&A that didn't record, I I mentioned there's a story in the Dhammapada commentary about a man who wants to join the Ajivikas.

And the Ajivikas were a spiritual movement in the Buddha's time that has now been extinct for centuries.

But it was

there were probably more Ajivikas than Buddhists, you know, in the first few decades of Buddhism at least.

And uh so this guy wants to join the Ajivikas and they were strict ascetics.

And so he goes there, says he wants to join up. And so two of the biggest

Ajivikas, they hold him down and they put two planks crosswise over his chest

and sit on those to hold him down onto

his back. Well, a third Ajivika takes a special kind of comb that grips the hair

and just ripped the hair off his head

and off of his face.

And that would probably was extremely unpleasant, but he hadn't even joined yet. That was just to get him ready to join.

And that kind of extreme faith-driven self-torture or just that kind of faith, like it was fairly common like in medieval Europe, you know, when when Western and Central Europe were, you know, universally Catholic.

You know, everybody just believes it.

Just the same way they would believe that if you stick your hand in a little fire, it will burn you.

And that is very rare nowadays,

especially in the West. The West is so eclectic. We're in the information age. You can get any amount of information on the internet. And so people are more eclectic, you know, they're more uh

sort of lukewarm, eclectic and lukewarm. So we're living in an age of spiritual mediocrity at best. Whereas in the Buddha's time, in a way it was just the zenith of human spiritual evolution, it seems to me. I mean, there were still psychopathic kings and bandits living in forests and, you know, just gruesome public executions and so forth. But at the same time, you had real just advanced sages and saints walking the

earth.

That

is not nearly so obvious today.

Now, it's it's much more mediocrity.

There's fewer saints and also fewer psychopaths.

Although it may be that the number of psychopaths is gradually increasing lately.

So,

what else was I going to say about this?

Did I say anything yesterday that I forgot to say today?

What's your opinion on spirituality in modern times versus Buddha time? Yeah, it's it's definitely more eclectic and

and less faith-oriented

and just more materialistic nowadays and
just more lukewarm.

Very lukewarm.

So, I think I'll just move on to the
next question. This is from Ketchup.

And Ketchup says, can I have a breath
meditation technique?

And it's hard to give meditation
techniques to somebody that I've never
met. I really don't know where they're
at because all sizes do not fit all. And
what is it? One size does not fit all.
That's what I That's what I meant to
say.

One size does not fit all. So, I mean,
if you've got a talent or you've got

experience, you might take a more advanced meditation technique than someone who's just a a rank beginner.

But I mean, the standard breath meditation technique is you sit cross-legged with your back straight and you focus your attention on the area around your nostrils where you can feel the air going in and out.

And that you observe the sensation of touch at the nostrils and generally um the beginning stages you use a label which is like breathing in, breathing out, breathing in, breathing out. But mainly the focus of the attention is just the the sensation

of the wind touching the area around
your nostrils.

And if you get more advanced and you can
keep your attention focused on the
sensation of touch around the nostrils
without having to put a label on it. You
know, your mind becomes um more quiet,
doesn't need to think so much, so you
can do away with the labels. If you can
continue to keep your mind focused on
the touch sensation,
um that's better because at least
according to Theravada Buddhism vedana
or the sensation of touch is ultimately
real, whereas breathing in, breathing
out is not ultimately real. That's just
a a concept.

So,

it brings you closer to reality just to be observing the sensation of touch as the air goes in and out of your nostrils. Don't try to follow it in, no no sweeping like the Goenka method does um or some some even some uh other orthodox Theravada Buddhist teachers will say you're supposed to follow the air into your body and and even follow it out to the tips of your fingers and toes which isn't the way your respiratory system works.

So, I mean you're just dealing with imagination at that point. But the sensation of touch here, you're closer

to reality.

And uh I mean for people that can't even do that, you know, their mind is still just too restless. You got the monkey mind just jumping around, then you may have to actually count breaths.

Which is the way I was taught how to do it and it's, you know, it's it's grinding away at the ABCs. But uh if that's what you need to do, then that's what you need to do. Where you count your breaths, you just, you know, breathing in, breathing out one, breathing in, breathing out two, breathing in, breathing out three, Go up to five, then go back to one, and go up to six, then back to one, and up to

seven, back to one, up to eight, back to one, up to nine, back to one, up to 10, and then back to one, and then up to five again, and you just keep going five through 10, five through 10. And if you lose count, that of course means your mind wandered away, and you're thinking about what you want to eat for dinner or something.

So, it depends on how good of a meditator you are to determine what kind of meditation technique you should practice, because if you've got a hyperactive mind that doesn't want to settle down, you're not good at samadhi yet, then you need kind

of a busy kind of meditation with lots of labeling to give your mind something to do to keep it out of trouble. Because if you try to do some really attenuated, quiet kind of meditation with a hyperactive mind, is your mind is just going to be wandering all over the place. It's won't have enough to keep it occupied.

On the other hand, if you don't need to label things anymore, that you can keep your mind focused on the object, the primary object of meditation, then you're better off just not labeling. The quieter your mind becomes, the quieter the meditation method that you follow

should become.

But again, I don't know Catch Up here, so I can't really say exactly where he is at in his meditation skills.

So, I'm just going to move on to the next question, which is from You Know I'm With It.

And You Know I'm With It says,

"I feel like most people say it's not possible to be a monk in the West. I think they just don't know the ins and outs of living in public lands, or as a bum in the Southwest or Northwest. Aside from the West being completely devoid of alms mendicancy, there are still good people here. Moving to another country

with sun-scorched pillaged forests just because there are faith followers of some ancient convention who will feed me seems like I'd be grasping at the ideal of the East being more suitable for the life of a mendicant or contemplative. I think that's a hack. I why take my defiled mind to some [_] up country when we have plenty of wilderness within close proximity to towns with good people here in the US who speak English. Maybe there's not malaria, but there's still grizzlies, lions, rattlesnakes, crocodiles, Marxists, etc. Now, I haven't seen many lions in America.

But anyway, I continue. I only mention

because a lot of monks seem to get a hard-on for how dangerous their ascetic practice is. What do you think? Why should one aspiring to live as a forest-dwelling mendicant leave the West behind?

Well, I mean, for starters here he said,

"Why should I

take my defiled mind to some [__] All

All countries are [__] up."

I mean, in certain ways Burma is [__]

up. It's, you know, it's under

essentially a military dictatorship, but

in some ways they're much better off

than we are here.

And America is is equally [__] up if

not more [_] up just in different ways.

So, um there's two main reasons why it does make sense for someone who does renounce the world like someone is ordained as a Theravada Buddhist monk, why it makes sense to spend some time in Southeast Asia or South Asia.

One is that the rules of monastic discipline are designed for India.

And India doesn't get very cold. I mean, in in temperate zone, it gets down to lethal temperatures in the wintertime.

And so, I mean, you might want to just migrate to Florida or Southern California every winter.

But, um

yeah, other than that, you would you would have to start breaking rules, which if you're a strict monk, you may not want to do.

But, more important than that, there's also

um like living in Burma, it was a blessing for me because the flora and fauna are pretty similar to the Ganges Valley. The Irrawaddy Valley and the Ganges Valley have almost the same flora and fauna naturally.

You're living in a Buddhist culture where you can live the way monks lived pretty much in the Buddhist time. Like out in the countryside of Burma,

um in a lot of respects, it's very similar to the way people were living in the Buddhist time in the Ganges Valley. I mean, they they've got motor scooters and radios and cell phones and rubber flip flops nowadays.

But, still, you've got the girl the teenage girl with the clay pot balanced at her head on her head going to the well or the river to fetch water for the house. You've got the guy taking his team of bullocks out to plow the fields. And they still have a devout Buddhist attitude

that you can fit into more easily. You can get support more easily. There are monks that go for alms round in the west

like some Ajahn Chah monks. They they seem to uh be doing fine living on alms food.

But, um

it's not nearly as as simple and they do have to break rules with regard to the amount of clothing they wear and so forth.

So, any monk any Theravada Buddhist monk or western monk

or someone who wants to become a

Theravada Buddhist monk, yeah, I would strongly recommend they spend at least 5 years

in a Buddhist country like Burma or Thailand or Sri Lanka.

Uh and then, you know, after they get their seniority and then can live without a teacher and have learned what they need to learn and then they can come back to the West.

But the West is a graveyard for Western monks. It's just it's much more difficult to be a monk in the West, partly because you do not have cultural support for it.

And also just the whole environment is not

uh

you know, it's not really in harmony with the rules of monastic discipline anymore.

So, I would still

say that uh

you know, anyone who wants to become a
wants to be a Theravada Buddhist monk
should spend at least a few years
in Burma or Thailand or Sri Lanka just
so they can get a taste for what it's
like to live the way monks lived in the
Buddha's time and it helps you to
understand a lot of stuff in the sutras
more easily because you're right there
in the middle of it instead of being in
some foreign country and foreign culture
trying to figure it out without personal
personal experience.

So,

that would be my answer to that. And so,

I'll just uh move on to you know I'm
with it second question here.

Which is, "Did you ever experience
heartbreak as a lad or were you the
heartbreaker?"

Well, when I was young, I had my heart
broken at least twice.

And also, I broke the heart of one girl.

And she broke my heart and I I broke
hers at on a different occasion. It It
was kind of mutual in that in that
particular relationship.

But uh

mainly as a kid,

um I mean, as a young person before I
became a monk,

um I always had this healthy distrust of

anything that would make big karma.

And that would include, you know, settling down with a one mate. You know, it's like when you settle down with the one, you've pretty much excluded all other options.

You know, you've limited yourself and you kind of locked yourself into a karmic path. And choosing a career was another one, although you don't have much choice with regard to that. You just get a career chosen for you if you don't choose one, cuz you have to do something for a living. In the West, it's the the curse of Adam.

You must earn our bread by the sweat of

our brow and all that.

Um so, anyways, it was like

I always had this

kind of ambivalent feeling. I mean, I

was fascinated by, you know, attractive

young women. You know, I couldn't help

but like them. You know, I'm a

red-blooded man. But at the same time,

there was also this sort of a spiritual

almost aversion, you know, almost almost

fear, where I generally didn't get close

to women very much.

Like when I was young, usually the women

I wound up having relationships with

were the ones that chased after me. And

the ones that chased after me were

generally the kind of women that would

chase after guys in general, like party girls essentially.

So, I really never got much to the point of breaking a girl's heart, cuz I didn't want to break anybody's heart. You know, I didn't want to hurt anybody. Like before I became a monk I like after I decided I was going to become a monk, you know, I I decided I wanted to be a monk around the age of 17. It took me 10 years to finally do it, but still I had this

this this plan, you know, it was like my aspiration to be ordained as a monk. And so, I didn't want to break anybody's heart. You know, I did Also, I didn't

want to just like pick up some chick at a bar and have a one-night stand. So, I was largely celibate most of the time uh before I was a monk, just uh just because of considerations of that.

And so,

um I did manage to break at least one heart, but more more often I just sorely disappointed girls who liked me and I was just too stand-offish and didn't go for it.

But it never got to the point of heartbreak. It was just, you know, there were some girls that were mooning over me, you know, they were they were disappointed that I never asked them out, that sort of thing.

But I did have my heart broken a couple times.

So I guess I answered that question and so I'm just going to move on to the next one. This is from COVaxinCpadZidana.

And COVaxinCpadZidana

says, and before I say what he says, I noticed that I keep red lining on the mic thing cuz I'm using like a new video recorder and I may have to adjust the the audio settings. Yeah, I think it's turned up to full blast right now.

So

I hope that uh

there's not too much distortion or anything.

Well, I'll I'll work on this. I'm I'm
not very good at uh
electronic stuff or computer stuff. But
uh

I trust that within 6 months I'll have
figured out at least 1/3 of all the the
bells and whistles on this this new
video recording software.

Anyway, it's getting back to
COVaxinCpadZidana.

He says, "Can you please do more
readings of suttas that have teachings
that would be considered unorthodox in
Theravada?"

Well, I've already done most of my
favorites, although um I still have most
of the Atika Wagga that I could do

readings of with, you know, commentary after that.

And I would guess at least half of the Atika Wagga, half of the suttas in the Atika Wagga

would be considered unorthodox

based on a literal reading of them.

So yeah, I can do that. It's really not that difficult. It's just that uh

mainly I've been working and then doing the Q&A's on the weekends and so um

fitting in more of these, I guess I'm going to be going on vacation in Ohio, um, next week, which is going to be at least a week. So, I'll probably have more more of a flexible schedule then.

Maybe I can get one in then.

So,

yeah, I mean, don't be surprised if if I
do at least,

um, a few more Atthakavagga readings.

And so, I'll probably do more in my
studies in Archaic Buddhism series,
which I think is only got like four
four videos so far.

But, uh, yeah, most of my favorite
examples

have already been

have already been read, except for like
the Atthakavagga. There's a few more I
could I could include, I suppose.

So, I'll just move on to Seal of Action
Sipa Zena's next question,

which is

It says in Majjhima Nikaya 116, "500

Pacceka Buddhas lived on Mount Isigili

for a long time. Were there any Pacceka

Buddhas when the Buddha attained

enlightenment, since they could still be

alive before him and just don't teach?

What would have happened if one of these

Pacceka Buddhas visited the Buddha?

Also, it says in the sutta that once the

Pacceka Buddha

Pacceka Buddhas entered the mountain,

they were never seen again. But, since

the Buddha said they lived there for a

long time, how did they survive for so

long without alms food? I know the

commentary says the mountains opened up like a garage door, and that's why they were never seen, but they still went out for alms food. But, this explanation doesn't make much sense and contradicts the part about them being never seen again. So, maybe you had a better idea." Well, for those of you who are

unfamiliar with

Pali technical terms, a Pacceka Buddha is a kind of fully enlightened Buddha who nevertheless remains a hermit and doesn't teach. And it's just the way it is that almost by definition they exist only in times when there is no Dharma in the world. So, in between Buddhisms, you know, you got a Buddha who starts the

the wheel of Dharma rolling again, and then you've got like this dispensation of of Buddhism that survives, and then it finally dies out, and then before the next Buddha rediscovers

Dharma and gets the wheel rolling again by starting a new and a new rendition of Buddhism, so to speak, then it's in the the spaces in between that you get Pacceka Buddhas. And it's practically by definition, and there's all the sort of stuff

in uh in like Buddhist ancient Indian philosophy or ancient Indian cosmology in general, where there's just things that's just the way it is. They don't

explain why that's the way it is, why it has to be that way. It just is. Like there's 17 mind moments per for every moment of matter. Why? That's just the way it is. Or every Buddha has to go through this this series of events in his life, you know, he's got to renounce the world and and take a certain vehicle. There's like four options, and then he has to do the years of of severe austerities, and then he's got to sit under a Bodhi tree. He has to become enlightened sitting under a tree. And why is this?

Just because. That's just like this universal cosmic law that never really gets explained.

Science is kind of this way, too. You know, the the charge of the electron is is such and such. Why?

They don't know. It's just the way it is.

And that's that's the way Pacceka Buddhas are. And it's it's more in a way, it's kind of explaining how there could have been enlightened beings before the time of the Buddha.

You know, it's

I consider it to be more mythology than fact, personally.

So, when we get to the the part about the all the Pacceka Buddhas living in Isigili,

which Isigili literally means something
Rishi swallower. You know, it's a cave
where it was just well-known. It was
near the city of Rajagaha, and it was
just well-known that lots of sages had
lived in this cave. And so, it became
known as the sage swallower or the Rishi
swallower.

And it says,

uh "To the end of the mountain, they
were never seen again."

Um well, I mean, there's various ways of
explaining. I think it's it's it's all
pretty much mythology. So, it's
academic.

Wow, I I bit my tongue when I was saying
that.

It's all academic.

But, um

I mean, it may be that through their psychic powers, they just didn't need to eat very much.

Or, it could be that the Devas were feeding them. There's one scene It could have even been in the the Mahasihanada Sutta that I mentioned earlier where the Buddha was emaciating himself and starving himself so severely that some of the Devas were getting concerned, and they were thinking about infusing like celestial mana into his body through psychic means just to keep him alive.

And who knows? Maybe the Pacceka Buddhas

were getting a

a main line of celestial mana from the
Devas or something.

But, I don't think it really matters
because, I mean, it's it's essentially
mythology.

At least in my opinion. I'm sure there's
devout Theravadans that would take issue
with that.

So, then I guess they would have to come
up with their own explanations for how
these Pacceka Buddhas could live sealed
up in a mountain for
you know, decades at the very least um
without having to
go out and collect food.

But, just almost by definition, like

I've already said, they could not exist at the same time as the Buddha. So, what would what would they talk about or if what would happen if a Pacceka Buddha met the Buddha? I have no idea.

Probably the Pacceka Buddha would just sort of, you know, wave or you know, nod and just continue on his way.

So, I'll just move on to Seevalaksh and Seepadzeedana's next question here.

Which is, how long did it take you to be able to get into a lotus pose comfortably to sit for hours or were you always flexible enough?

Well, the longest I ever sat in the lotus position was maybe a little over 2

hours.

Because as a general rule, it would start getting painful after about 1 hour.

I'm not I'm not very flexible. My father was less flexible than me. He couldn't even squat down on his heels.

So,

let's see, how long did it take me to be able to get into a lotus pose to sit comfortably, not for for hours, but at least for 1 hour, like a meditation session. It took me

I don't know, maybe 4 or 5 months. You like you start sitting in the easy position, like the also known as the Burmese position where you got both legs

just kind of and I'm trying to do this,
both legs just kind of flat on the
floor, not crossed over each other. And
when you can sit for a full hour, a full
meditation session, however long that
is, in relative comfort, then you move
up to like the quarter lotus or the half
lotus. Let's see, half lotus
I'm trying to do this in reverse order
from
Okay.

I don't know. Half lotus, you've got one
one foot on top of one thigh and the
other the other one isn't. And so,
I mean then you you switch to that and
then when you can sit in the quarter

lotus or the half lotus for a full meditation session without undue pain then you you move up to the full lotus. So I mean it didn't take very long. I was in my late 20s so I was more flexible than I am now.

Um

yeah you just gradually work your way into it and I was meditating a lot several hours a day at the time so I got lots of practice at it.

I'm not particularly flexible.

So I'll just move on to the next question here and this is from Keep Devineer.

And Keep Devineer says, "Does Anatta mean that you have to constantly look at

your mind and body from a third-person perspective? If so, that sounds pretty scary."

Well Anatta doesn't mean that you have to constantly look at your mind and body from a third-person perspective although mindfulness pretty much requires that.

And when you're being mindful you're practicing Satipatthana or

um just

mindfulness in general.

Um

I mean you are are like observing

everything that comes up that

objectively. So if if even if it's a

mental state, let's say it's fear, you

don't think I'm afraid, you just say you think fear is arising. You observe the fear. That's if you're still at the stage of labeling things. You would say, you know, fear or fear is arising.

Um you know, it's not I'm afraid.

And you know, if that may sound scary but then if you're just

you know, you're being consistent then you observe the being scared. You observe the fear. Fear is arising.

So

yeah it's kind of a

an implication of Anatta. Anatta means no self by the way. Just for those of you who are unfamiliar with the terms.

Anatta means no self In Buddhism, there

not only is not an eternal soul, but there isn't even an ultimately real individuality.

So,

yeah, I mean, that's one of the implications of anatta, I guess. That's why in mindfulness you observe everything objectively.

Ev- anything that is observable, you know, you just remain detached from it. It isn't you. I mean, that's like an implication of anatta. Anything that you can observe is not you.

So, you observe it like from a third-person perspective, I guess, although there is no third person,

because there's no person.

So,

I guess I answered that. I'll just move on to keep the money as next question.

What is the difference between Buddha nature and the Hindu concept of Atman?

Yeah, I'd say that they're very similar.

They're Buddha nature is a Mahayana's term. It's really not a Theravada

Buddhist term, but Buddha nature is sort of like the

the foundational

capacity or potential for full

enlightenment that everybody has within them.

And the Atman, like in the Upanishads, is

is is God. Is Brahman. And really, the Buddha nature is just like is is similar to the Atman in that, you know, the Atman is just that aspect of God that is in in you. Since I mean, God is everywhere, God is also inside you. So, that aspect of God that is inside you is your Atman, which is the same as the God that is not inside you. It's just all God.

And the Buddha nature is kind of like that. It'd be like uh the one mind that I mentioned uh earlier was that the uh Tibetan Book of the Great Liberation was referring to, or the Dharmakaya. You know, the Dharma body of the Buddha.

Is is just sort of like this infinite formless consciousness that pervades the universe. And you could argue that your Buddha nature is, you know, that aspect of the Dharmakaya that is inside you.

So, they would be very similar and it wouldn't be too surprising because Vedanta and Mahayana Buddhism, they they interacted a lot, they debated a lot, they borrowed ideas from each other. And so, yeah, there's there's a lot of similarity between the two, a lot of overlap.

So, yeah, Buddha nature in Mahayana Buddhism would be fairly similar depending on who you're talking to, I guess. The different

philosophers might have different explanations.

But, it does seem fairly similar to the Buddha the Hindu concept of the Atman or the true self.

Except Buddha nature or the the Mahayana Buddhists wouldn't refer to it as the true self.

So, I'll just move on to Keep the videos next question.

Which is, if a man behaves like a woman, he can't be ordained, right? But, what if a man is gay but behaves like a man? Well, if a man behaves like a woman, he can't be ordained. Well, it depends on how he behaves like a woman. Like if he

just talks with a lisp, you know, like the lilting kind of very gay voice that some gay men have, you know, he kind of has like a his arm his wrist is kind of lacking in in stiffness, let's say. I mean, that wouldn't disqualify a guy if he just had some effeminate features but still was like heterosexual.

Um yeah, that wouldn't disqualify him. Some monks might kind of be hesitant to ordain him, but still, um he wouldn't be disqualified. But, and then I guess the question here mainly is, what if a man is gay but behaves like a man? Well, I mean, having sex with a man is is not behaving like a man

from the point of view of ancient Indian culture.

So, if you're having sex with other men, that would imply that you're not fully male because to some degree you're behaving like a woman by wanting to have sex with men rather than with women.

So,

if a man is gay but behaves like a man, that would imply, at least from an ancient Indian

context or my understanding of same,

that he's not having sex with men. He's a latent homosexual, in which case

um it wouldn't disqualify him. I There

There's lots of latent homosexual monks

in the Sangha in Burma. In fact, just about every comfortable meditation center in a town or city has got like a an assistant Sayadaw who is pretty obviously a latent homosexual.

And I think that's largely cultural, just as it's been cultural in Catholic countries that you have a latent homosexual man who really is not attracted to women, doesn't want to get married, and wants a socially acceptable way of not getting married to a woman. He can just renounce the world and become celibate.

And uh fortunately for Theravada Buddhism, there's much less scandal

with regard to homosexual monks or like molesting boys and so forth or molesting each other for that matter.

Um

Like in in Catholicism, that's just like a

I mean, it's like a stereotype now. It's just It's apparently running rampant.

But um fortunately in Theravada, it's not that bad, partly because Theravada or at least Burma is just a much more traditionalist conservative culture.

They take their religion more seriously, and uh

un- unlike the West, even even the Catholic West.

So, I hope I answered that question.

It's it's kind of a contentious issue that, you know, what is it exactly that causes a man from being fully a man that that thereby disqualifies him from being ordained because a man or a woman that wants to be ordained as a monk or a nun must be fully male or fully female. They can't be somewhere in between.

And apparently, even a bisexual would be sufficiently in between as to be disqualified from being ordained, if you can believe the ancient texts.

So,

if a man is gay but doesn't have sex with other men, you know, he's he's a latent, then that presumably would not

disqualify him. It certainly hasn't in
Burma.

Cuz there's lots of those.

But, I mean, once you're ordained, if
you have sex with anybody, you're
excommunicated for life.

So,

that that takes care of itself except
for in cases where they're doing it
secretly, which may be most cases.

And uh

I've heard of some of that. I've

Apparently, it's more of a problem in
Thailand than in Burma.

Thailand, the Thais are more sensual,
more sexually oriented than the Burmese.

Um based on my experience with with both cultures.

So, I guess I'll just move on to the next question here. This is from Ohm.

And Ohm says, "Are you surprised that after that last video with Brian Roo, some Christians are trying to convert you very much in comments?"

And yeah, I did a a video recently with Brian Roo about the limitations of Christianity. And

Brian, especially, was wanting to

I mean, he he had this idea that

um I mean, Christianity cannot lead you to enlightenment. You're not going to make much spiritual progress.

Uh, but I mean, I was a little more

open-minded on the subject. I do think that it's possible for a Christian to become enlightened if they've got a sufficient, you know, root of merit, you know, they've got they're ripe for enlightenment. I think Saint John of the Cross may have been fully enlightened. But, um, if if a Christian does become enlightened, it would be pretty much as much in spite of Christianity as because of it, because there's all these limiting ideas in Christianity that kind of hold you down like, you know, nobody is worthy of heaven that it's or heaven is the highest you can get. Nobody is worthy of it. It's only the grace of God

that's going to get you there, that sort of thing.

Um, but anyway, in the comments, you had a number of, you know, small number of Christian people who were sticking up for Christianity. And, uh, you know, maybe out of compassion trying to tell us that, uh, you know, if if we don't accept Jesus Christ as our savior, we will not be saved, that sort of thing.

And

it doesn't really surprise me. It's it's it's just human nature that I mean, if if I'm watching,

um,

something about Buddhism and you've got people bashing Buddhism, I'll stick up

for Buddhism.

And it's pretty similar to Christians, you know, you got a devout Christian and we're criticizing Christianity, um, you know, to some degree, you know, talking about its limitations and so forth, saying how, you know, Paul of Tarsus kind of messed things up for Christians even at the same time that he made Christianity a world religion. He just kind of derailed it from the original teachings of Jesus, that sort of thing, and they don't like that. And so, they're kind of defending Christianity as, you know, divine teachings of God almighty and so

forth.

So, no, I wasn't surprised at all. It's just to to be expected.

So, I'll just move on to Ohm's next question, and this is the very last question, and I sincerely hope this is recording. I really do.

And Ohm's last question, and the very last question of this Q&A, is as follows, "Apart from Sadducees in ancient Judaism, are you aware of any religion or cult which accepts death and doesn't believe in the afterlife? I myself can't find any."

Well, I mean, the Old Testament in general really like the Book of Ecclesiastes pretty much teaches when

you're dead, you're dead.

That uh there were a lot of Hebrews in Old Testament times that just did not believe in an afterlife, and what little afterlife there was, it was kind of like just I mean, you were there, but you were asleep. Sort of like uh

I think it's the

what it's it's the story where

uh King Saul goes to the Witch of Endor because he wants She's like a spirit medium, and you know, he wants to talk to Samuel, the prophet, who is already dead. And Samuel the prophet, when he comes through the Witch of Endor, when she's channeling him or whatever, you

know, he's saying, "Why did you wake me up?" You know, he was he was like sound asleep in this Sheol afterlife.

Um

and then like uh like I just said, a lot of the early Hebrews, not just the Sadducees, just did not believe in an afterlife, and Judaism is really a very this-worldly religious system.

But aside from that, like the Rigveda, I mean, I haven't read all of the Rigveda, but I've read a lot of hymns from the Rigveda. There doesn't seem to be any mention of an afterlife. You know, Rigveda also, early Vedism, was very this-worldly.

You know, it's like you're making fire

sacrifices to the gods in order to get certain things in return.

You know, you want victory in battle and many sons and many cattle, essentially.

And so, there's really not much talk about

um an afterlife. You know, there may be a heaven, that's where the gods live,

and uh it may be sort of like in

Greco-Roman paganism that some, you

know, magnanimous hero types might be

found worthy of ascending into the the

heaven realm and become one of the gods,

but um I really don't think that there's

a mention of what happens to normies. I

don't think it

I'm I'm not sure. I guess they did have, you know, the early Vedic chieftains did have those big elaborate burial mounds, so maybe that was assuming that there's going to be an afterlife, but I'm not sure.

Um in more recently, you got like Nisargadatta Maharaj, who denied that there was any kind of afterlife. He just said that after you die, your conscience just blends back into Brahman.

Um

and I guess there are probably other Hindus who who believe the same thing, or or just spiritual teachers who say there is no afterlife, that reincarnation is a myth, and that you

just

re-merge into into the the the ground of
being or God or whatever.

Um so, I guess that could be an
afterlife as God,

but

I'll take a drink of milk while I think
about this.

One thing about Nisargadatta Maharaj,
though,

is he denied that there was any kind of
rebirth, you know, in heaven or hell or
as humans or anything,

but at the same time, he still agreed
with the first noble truth of Buddhism,
that to exist is to suffer.

So, I mean, if you're just going to essentially attain Nirvana at death, if everybody attains parinirvana at the moment of death, why not just commit suicide?

I I don't think he ever really addressed that issue, or at least it wasn't in the book that I read about Nisargadatta Maharaj.

So, I assume there have been um other religions that do not accept an afterlife.

But, um

most of them do, even if it's just sort of like a dark like like the Greeks, the ancient Greeks, they believed in Hades, and it was an

afterlife, but it was just sort of like this gloomy, almost like a dream world, which was not very uh I mean, they did they weren't looking forward to going there. They didn't have this idea that uh if you're just a good person and love your neighbor and all that, that you're going to go to a good place after you die, unless you're just really a hero, you're like a demigod or something.

So,

yeah, I mean, some

some Hindus, I think, and just some of the eclectic Western spiritualists,

also, I think, would deny an afterlife.

A lot of Western Buddhists, for that

matter, probably deny an afterlife cuz they're so invested in like Western materialism and scientific realism that you know, an afterlife cannot be demonstrated through scientific means, and so, they just reject it along with nirvana and and lots of other fundamental teachings of Buddhism.

So, yeah, I I I includes a lot of Western Buddhists among this among the number of people who don't believe in an afterlife. And uh that's it. I guess I answered that question. I guess I answered these questions. Sometimes, it's like I don't really have this feeling of closure and

satisfaction after trying to answer a question that is difficult to answer.

But, uh I did my best. And if you've got any questions, you are very welcome to ask in the comments below. And um feel free to check out the URL links, including the books for sale on Amazon and smash the like button and subscribe and also furthermore be happy. And I'm going to try and turn this off now. And then I go like this.